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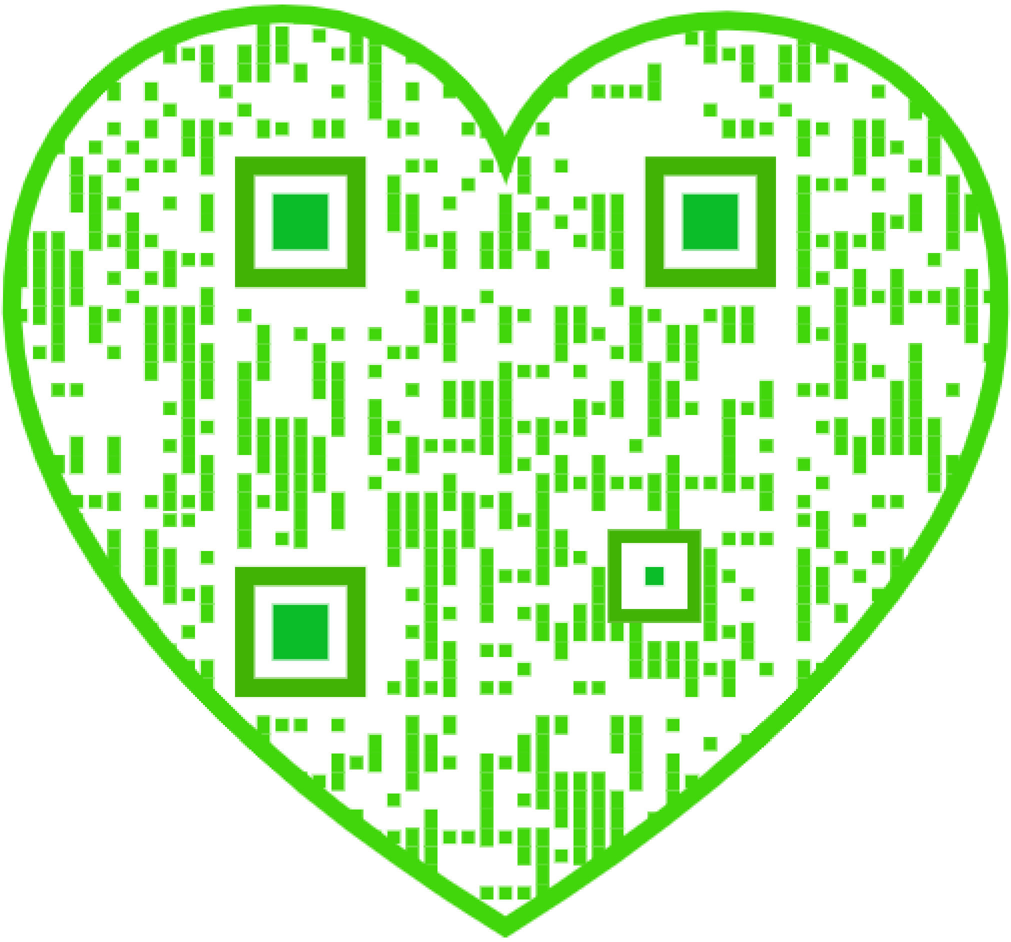

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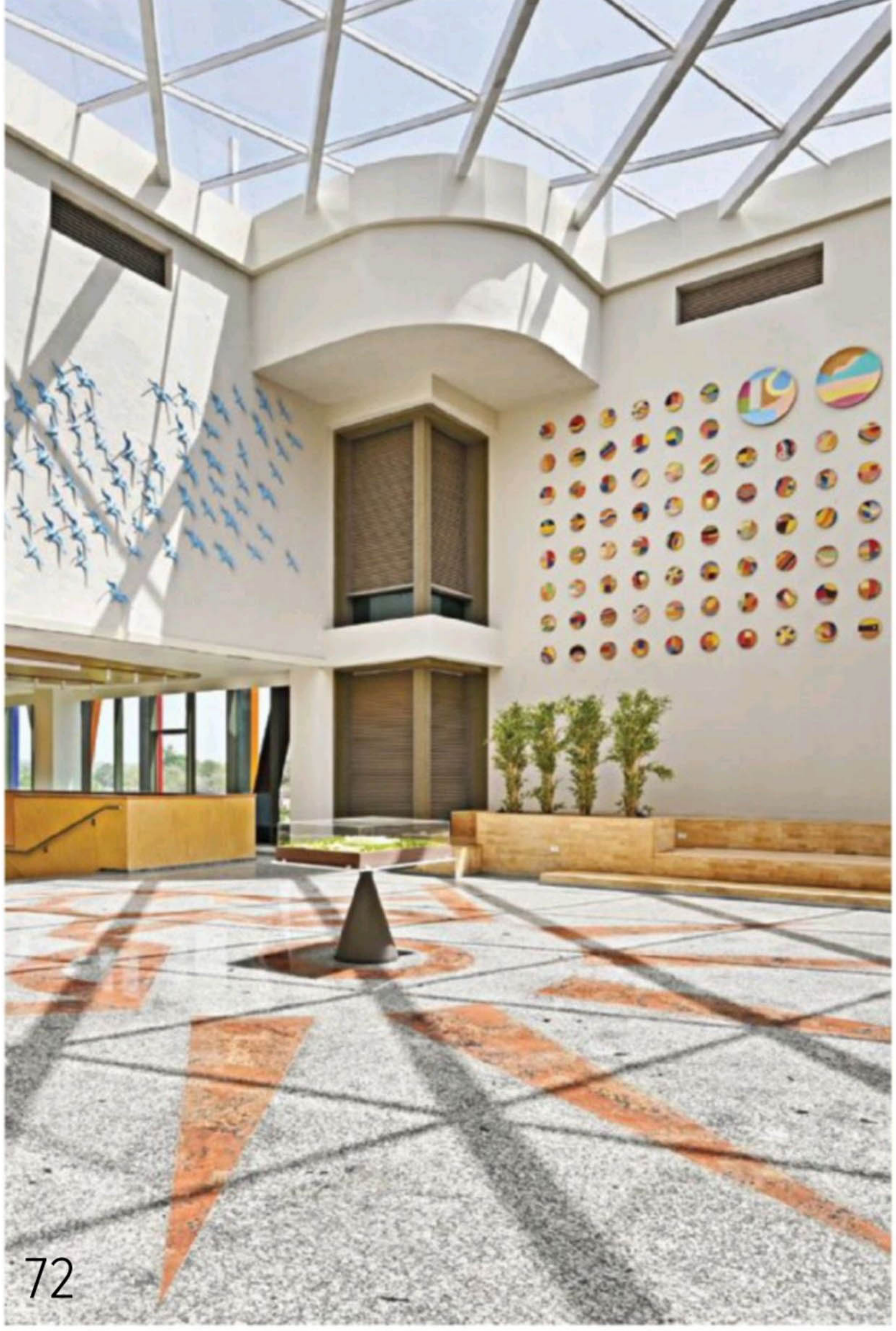

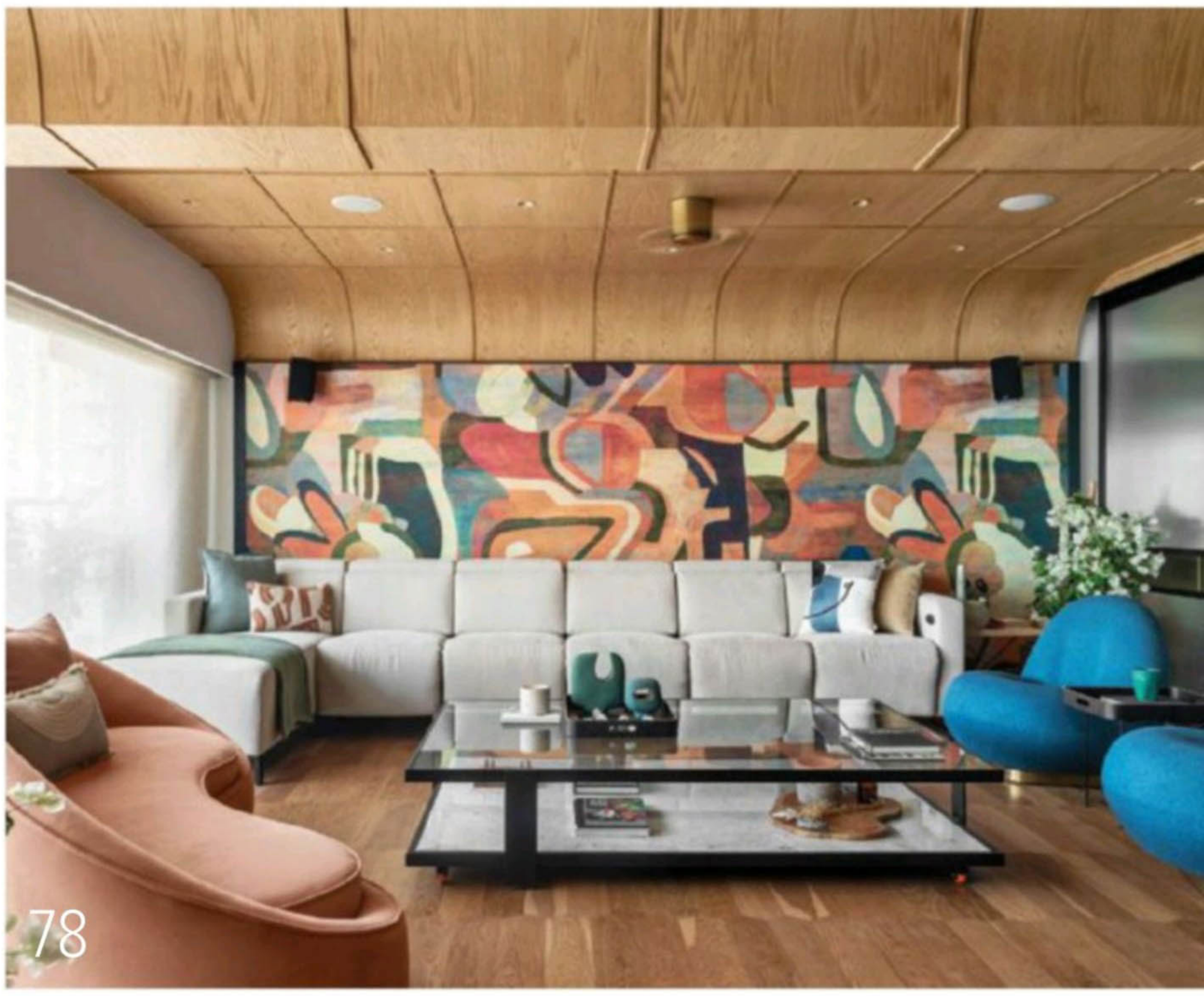

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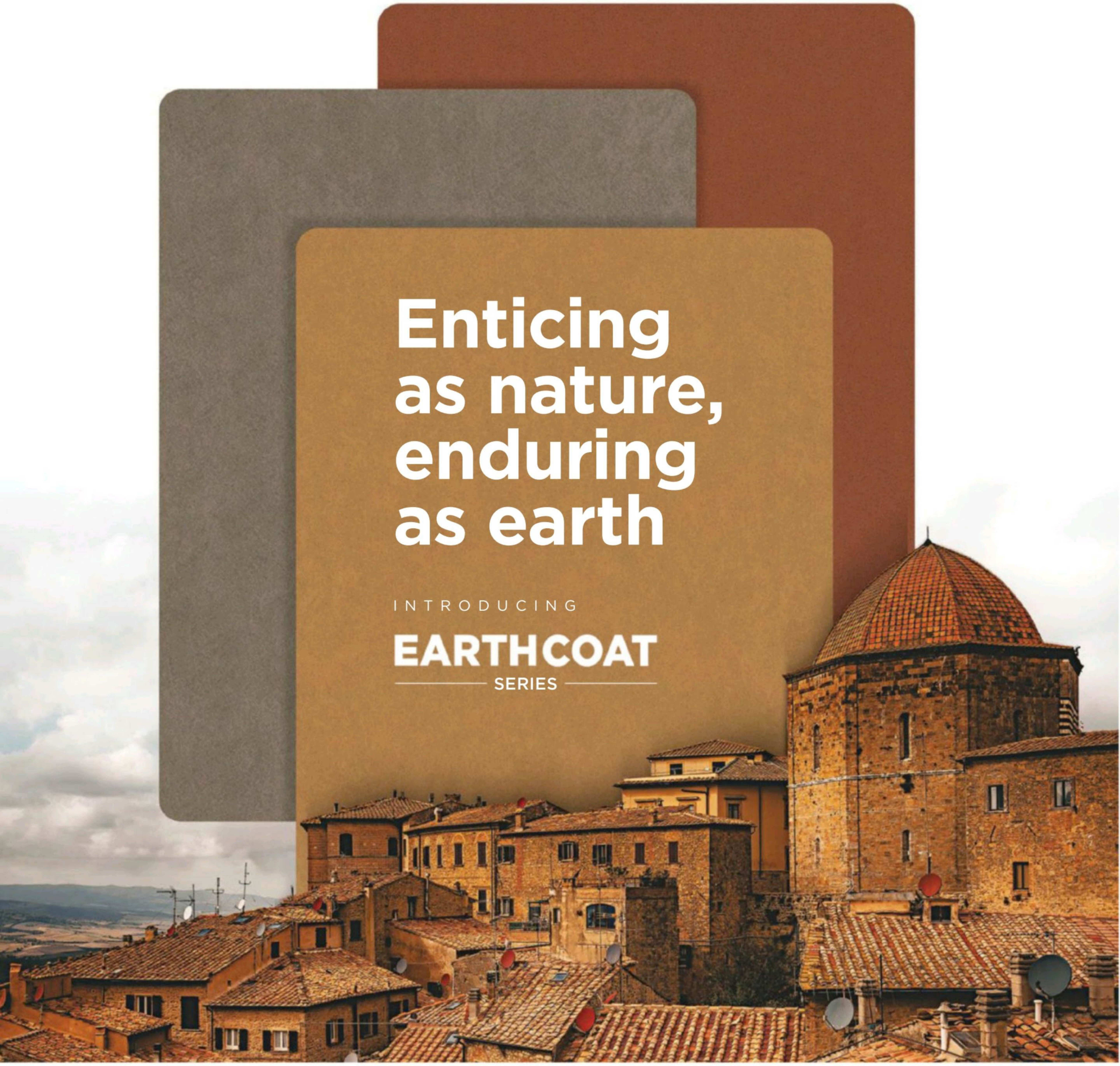
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> “Everything is designed. Few things are designed well.”
> **—BRIAN REED**

The design world is abuzz, and for good reason. In today’s visually driven society, design surrounds us, influencing every aspect of our lives. It’s only fitting that design takes centre stage, don’t you think? The design world is in the midst of a transformation, and we’re thrilled to play a part in shaping its future. For us, the year has started with tremendous energy. And we are looking forward to everything that’s in store for us.

In this Issue, we had the privilege of sharing an exclusive conversation with the visionary Shimul Javeri Kadri and her partners, Roshni Kshirsagar, Vaishali Shankar and Sarika Shetty. We delve into the fascinating journey of their practice, from its humble beginnings as a solo endeavour to its evolution into a thriving partnership. Through their story, we gain insight into the values, passions and dedication that have propelled them to the forefront of Indian architecture.

Additionally, we bring you highlights from two of the world’s premier design events: BAU in Munich and Maison & Objet in Paris, giving you a sneak peek into the latest trends and innovations that shaped these global design gatherings.

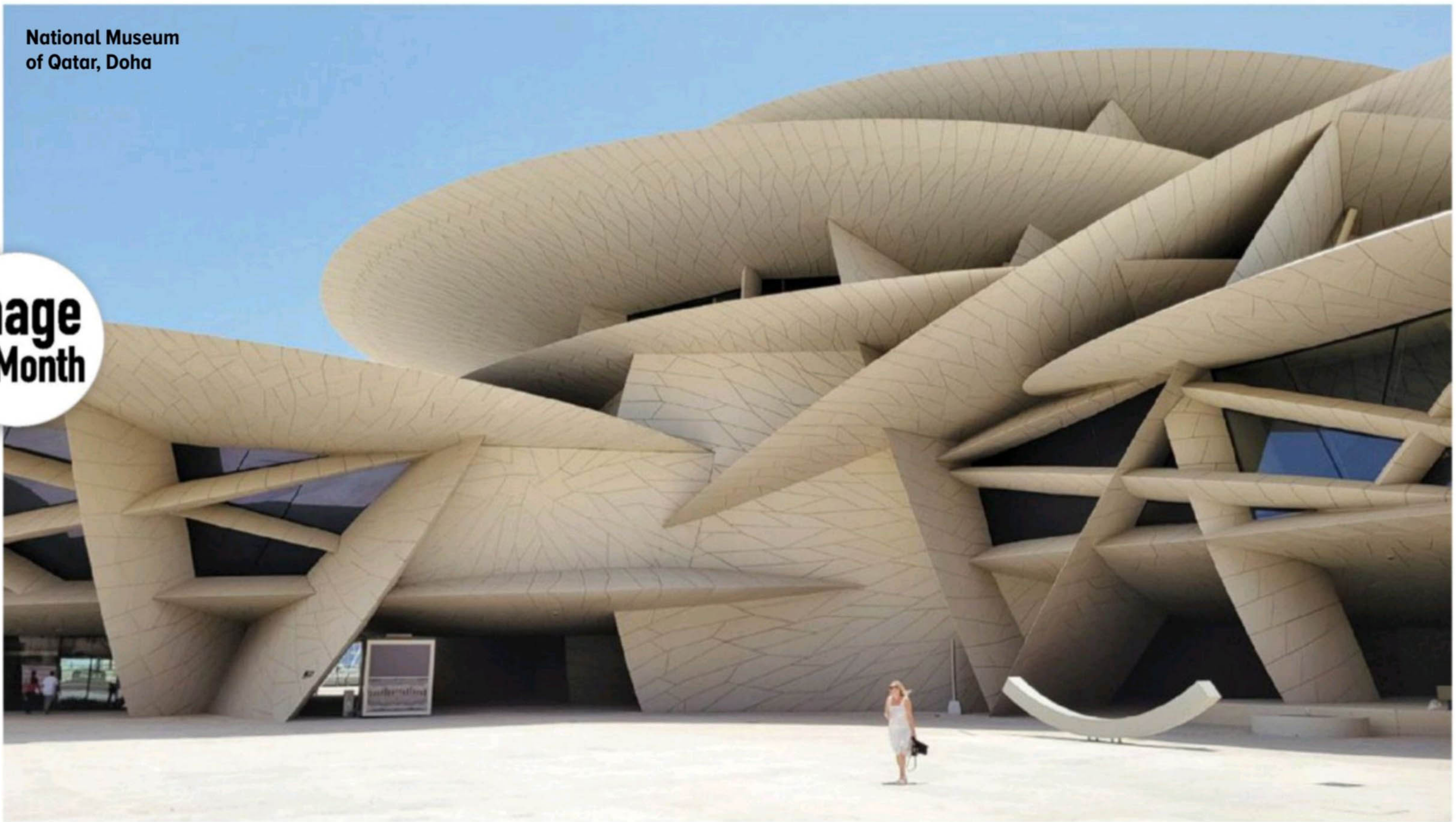
Don’t miss our captivating feature ‘What’s on your Vision Board’, where we take you on a journey into the creative minds of architects, from their first inspirational sketches to the final results. We’re also delighted to share a thought-provoking conversation with architect Monish Siripurapu, offering valuable insights and perspectives that are sure to resonate.

We’re excited to share this packed Issue with you, carefully curated with the best of design and architecture. We enjoyed putting it together, and we hope you have just as much fun reading it!

Happy Reading!

(Seema Sreedharan)
Editor

Image of the Month



National Museum of Qatar, Doha

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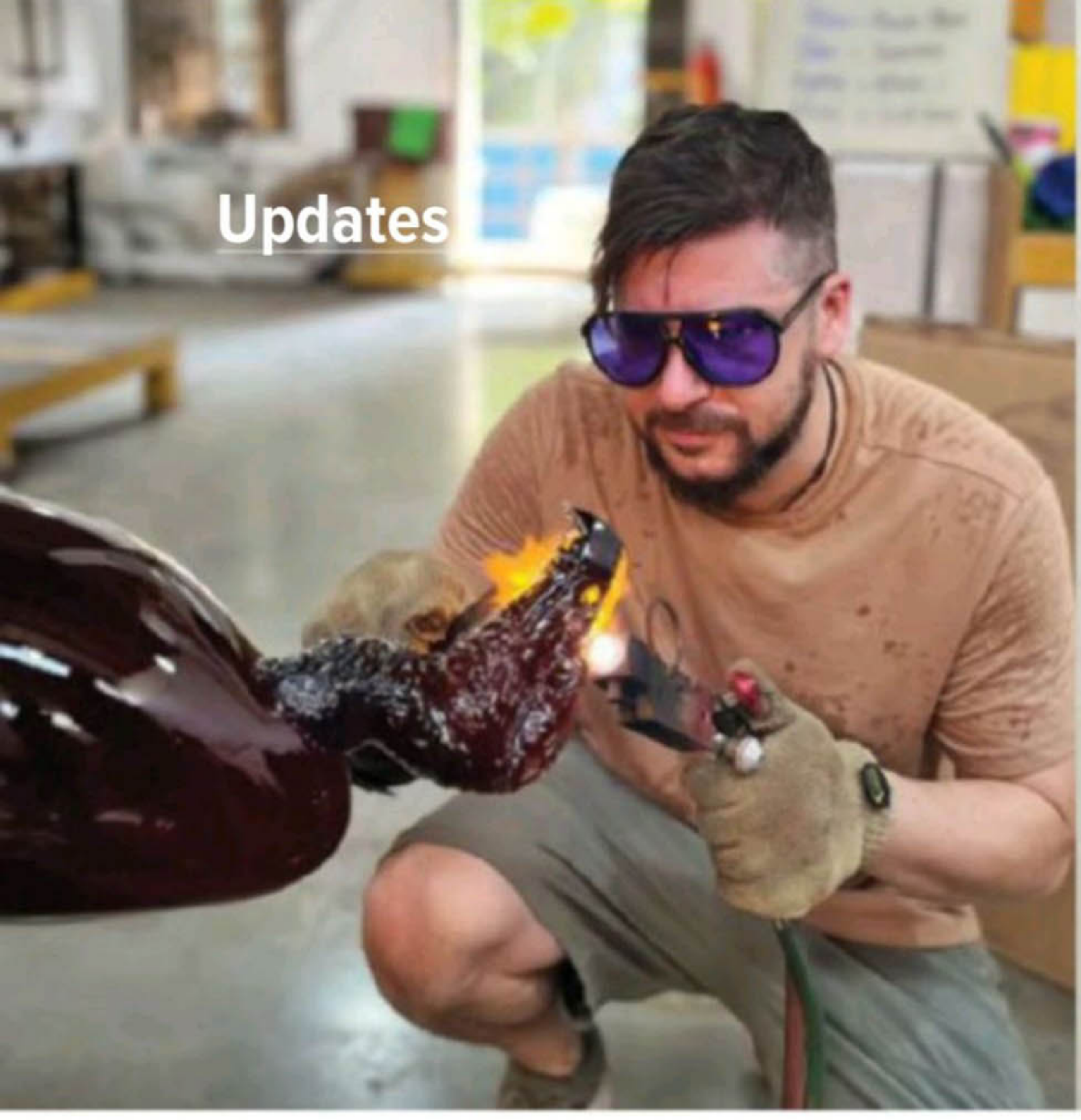

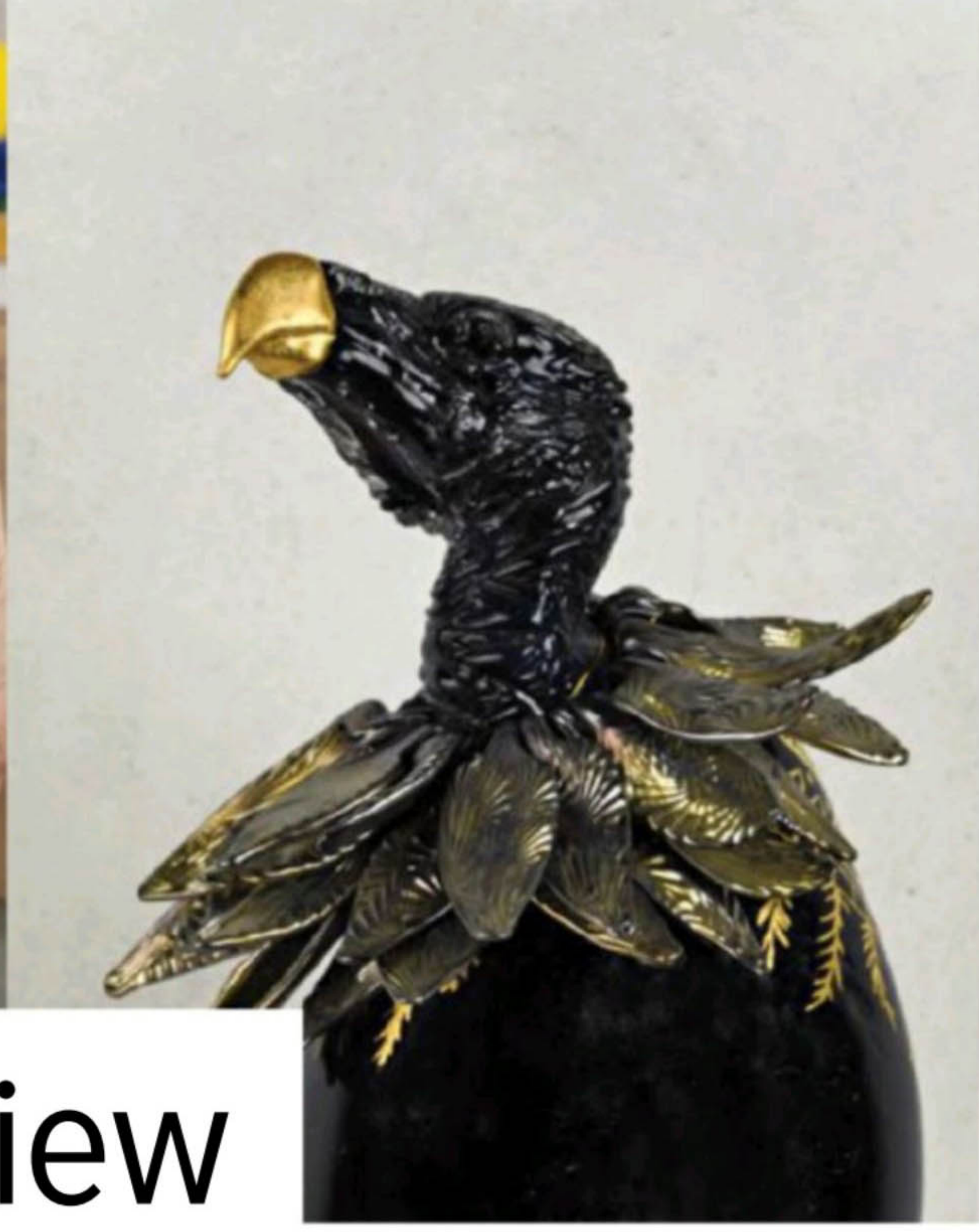

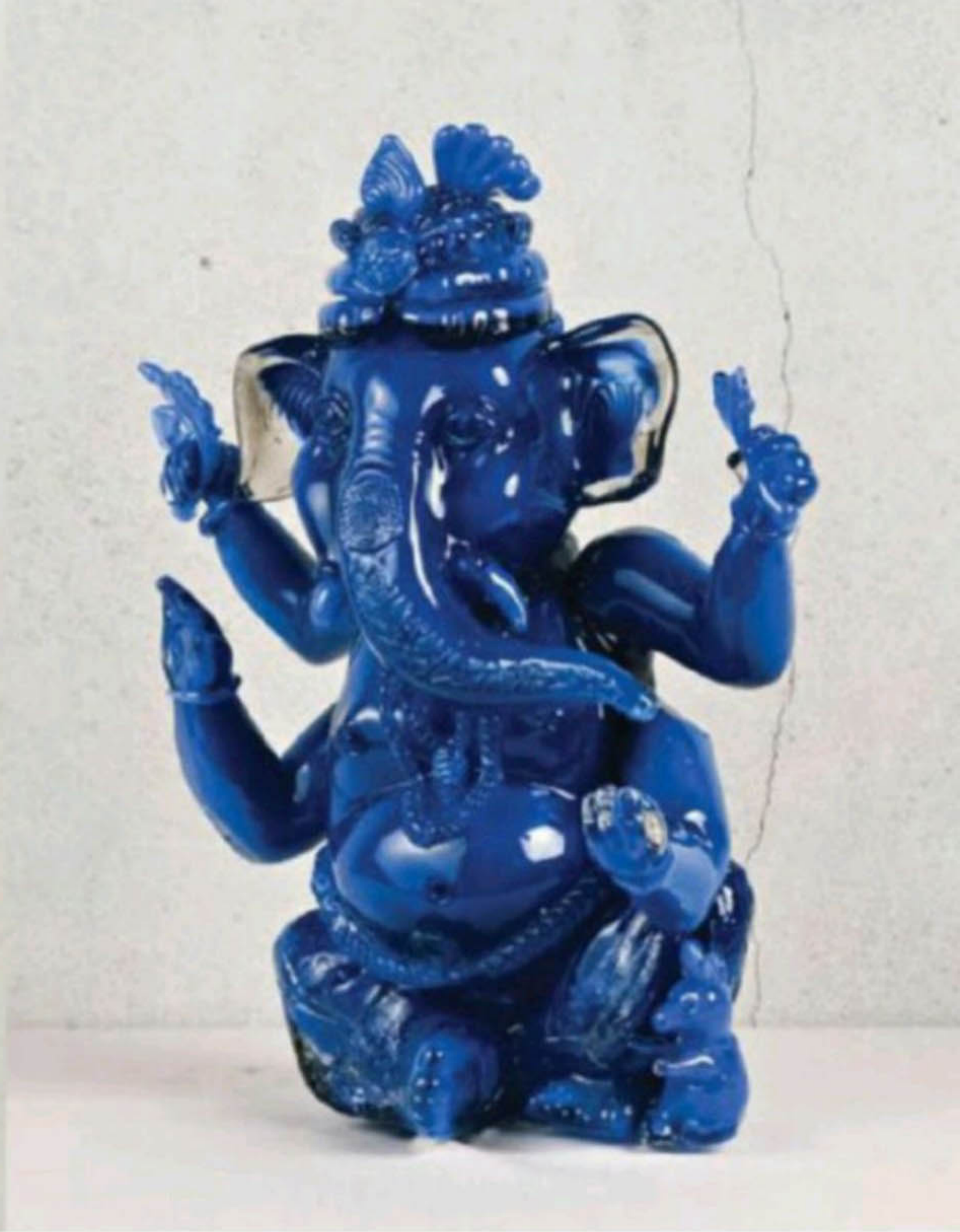

Market Review

EXHIBITION

Eros Building Hosts India's First Blown Glass Art and Light Studio, Showcasing Global Talent and Local Craftsmanship

The iconic Art Deco Eros Building, a cornerstone of Mumbai's architectural heritage, now houses India's first-ever blown glass art and light studio. Situated in one of the world's largest concentrations of Art Deco architecture, it was the perfect venue for the unveiling of the Glass and Lighting Gallery by designer Arjun Rathi. The event combined historical grandeur with inventive design, infusing the space with new energy that reflects India's emerging glass art movement.

Rural Modern Glass Studio, India's pioneering art-glass space, blends global expertise with local craftsmanship. Known for advanced glass-blowing techniques, the studio creates striking works that challenge the boundaries of conventional craftsmanship. This exhibition features Grant Garmezy's sculptures, where hyperrealistic depictions of Indian wildlife are reimagined as surreal daggers, gilded by local artists. For the first time, Garmezy collaborated with glassblower Evan Schauss, with additional contributions from Erin Neff Garmezy & Jeremiah Jacobs. Led by Arjun Rathi, the studio encourages both international and Indian artists to explore glass as a medium, reshaping India's glass art scene through workshops and custom glassware.

TRADE NEWS

Andre Eckholt, MD of Hettich India, Reappointed Co-Chair of FICCI Furniture Committee for 2025

Andre Eckholt, Managing Director of Hettich India, has been reappointed Co-Chair of the FICCI Furniture Committee for 2025. Since its inception in April 2020, the committee has worked to tackle industry challenges and enhance collaboration among the government, industry leaders and stakeholders. Its key focus areas include improving raw material access, reducing logistics costs and promoting furniture hubs across India.

Eckholt's reappointment comes as India's 'Make in India' initiative drives growth in the sector. He emphasised India's potential to lead in global furniture manufacturing and exports. Hettich India's support in sustainability and skill development aligns with the committee's vision of a competitive, self-reliant furniture industry.

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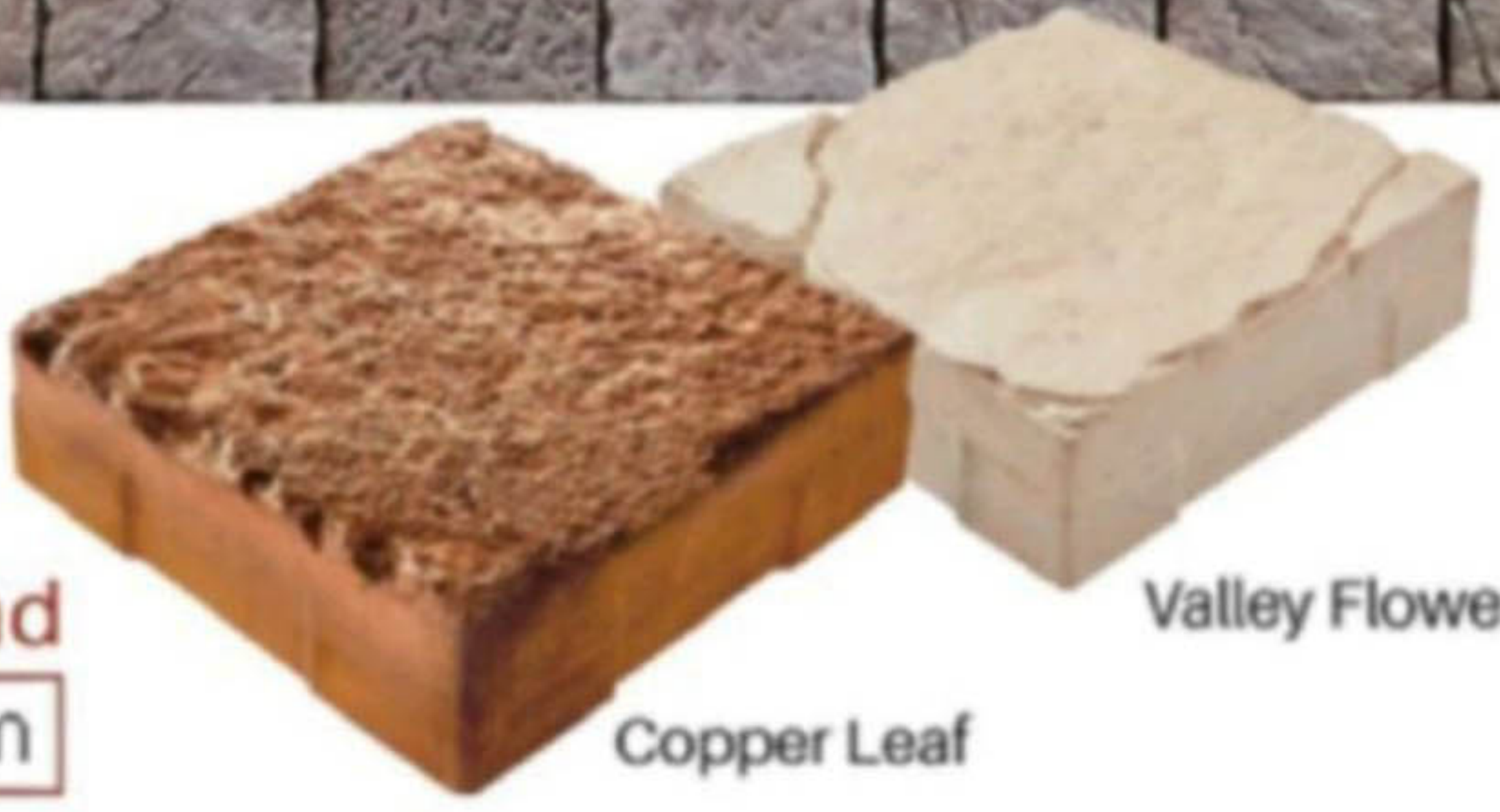

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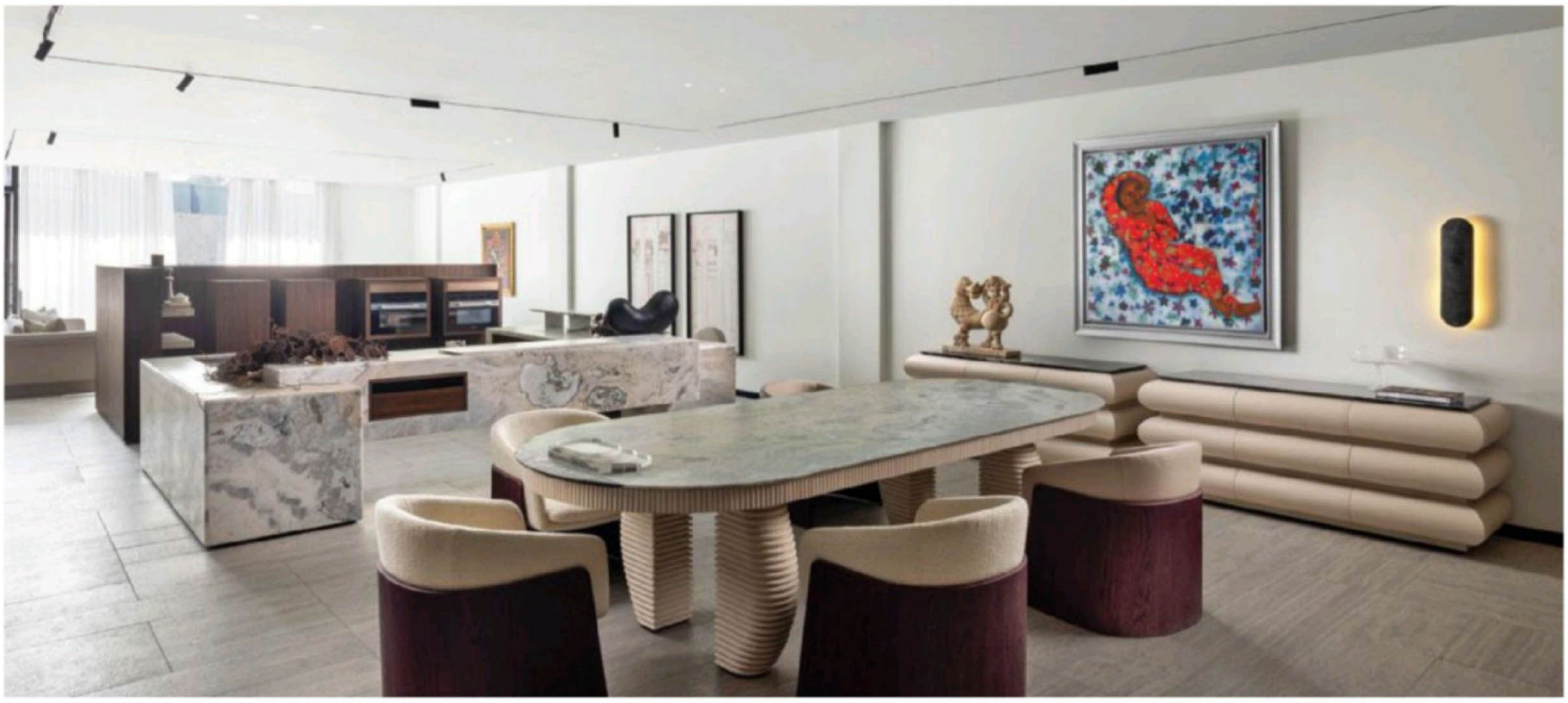


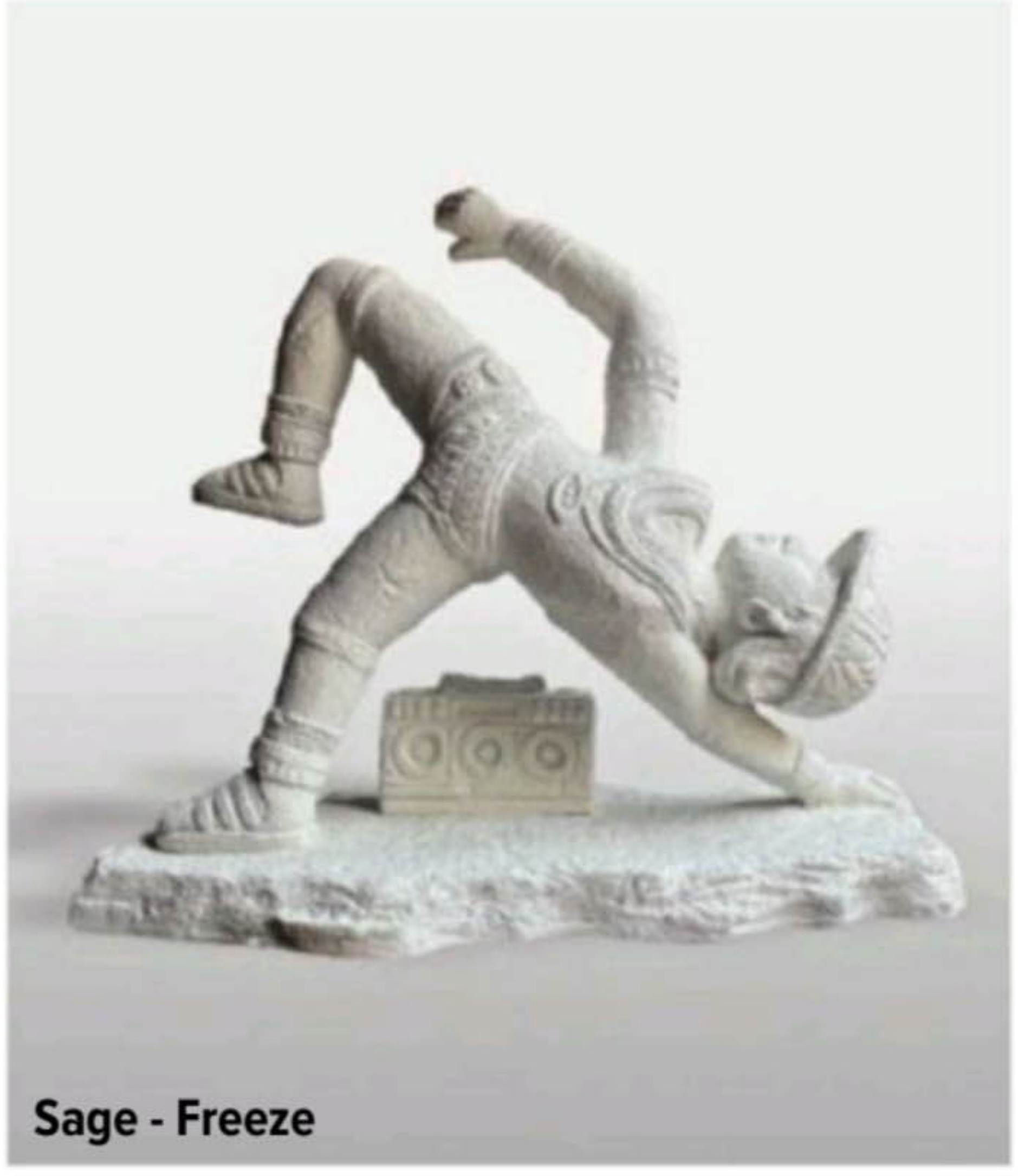
TRADE NEWS

Essentia Home Opens Second Flagship Store in New Delhi

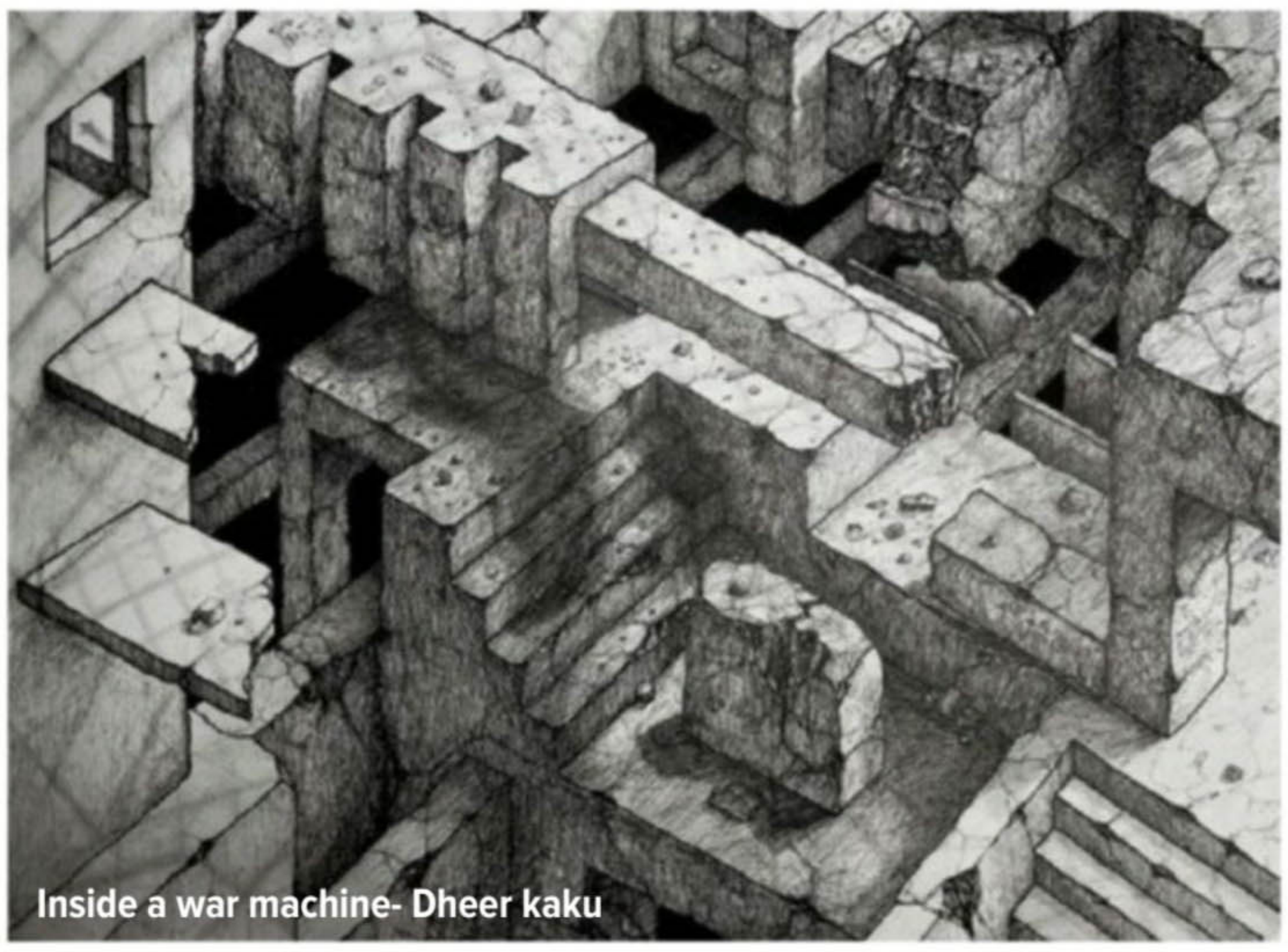
Following the success of its Gurugram flagship, Essentia Home has opened a second store on MG Road in the Delhi Design District. Founded by Hardesh and Monica Chawla, this new store marks a milestone in their 25-year journey in luxury interiors, with Hridik Chawla leading the Experience Center.

Spanning 20,000 sq ft, the store offers bespoke furniture, sculptural pieces, handcrafted furnishings and state-of-the-art kitchens, all reflecting Essentia's design philosophy. It also features an exclusive North India partnership with Italian brand Rimadesio, showcasing their luxury products.

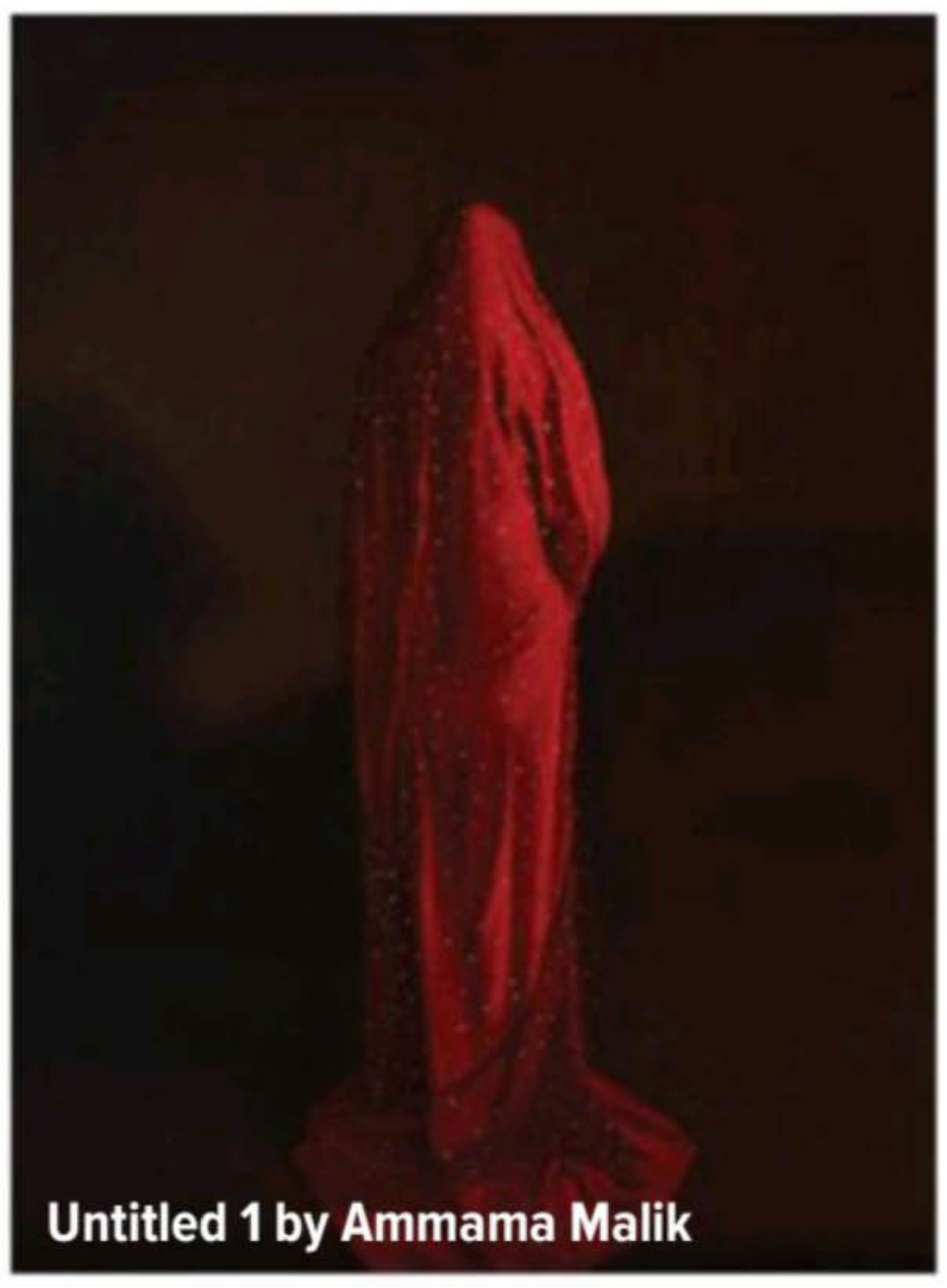
Essentia Home brings together innovative technology and skilled craftsmanship, offering a hassle-free experience for both designers and homeowners.



Sage - Freeze



Inside a war machine- Dheer kaku



Untitled 1 by Ammama Malik

EXHIBITION

Method Presents South Asian Art at India Art Fair 2025

Method returns to the India Art Fair 2025 with a bold showcase of contemporary South Asian artists, blending tradition with futurism, politics with play, and craft with rebellion. This year's presentation features a dynamic range of works, including Ammama Malik's exploration of identity and socio-political landscapes, Kunel Gaur's futuristic visual creations, and Priyesh Trivedi's new piece in his Adarsh Balak series. SAGE reinterprets Indian iconography through b-boy culture, while Mohd. Intiyaz debuts politically charged paintings. Gargi Chandola's modern take on Indian miniatures and Darshika Singh's meditative abstract works complete the presentation. Method's showcase highlights the energy of South Asian art, pushing boundaries and fostering collaboration, with locations in Mumbai and Delhi.

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DESIGNING HOMES WITH SMART SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

As India's Smart Cities vision aims for a cleaner, more sustainable environment, the need for smart solutions is clear. Every home embodies the consumer and traits like energy efficiency, where fans optimize air flow based on the ambient temperature, décor and LED lighting systems illuminate spaces with minimal energy consumption. Technology combined with product design, colour, form finish are key aspects for consumers.

Enable Smart Living in Your Home

Nothing exemplifies smart living like a fan that enhances comfort while prioritizing energy efficiency. The Magnus fan from IVAS Electricals, powered by advanced POS and BLDC technology, features an aerodynamic design with a sleek matte and metallic finish. Its bi-directional motion optimizes airflow year-round, providing cool air in summer and warmth in winter, all while offering double the runtime on an inverter. Similarly, the Ventrix Bluetooth-paired Chimney by IVAS ensures energy-efficient, sustainable cooking with LED lights, Thermo Auto Clean, and low-noise operation.

Transform City Streets with LED Street Lights

Just as our homes are integral to our daily lives, so are our city streets and neighbourhoods. They form the backbone of urban living, making them essential in shaping sustainable cities. IVAS LED Street and Flood Lights, an energy-efficient and transformative innovation consume significantly less power than traditional systems while providing brighter, more reliable illumination. These eco-friendly solutions are integral to the development of smart cities, aligning seamlessly with the vision of a sustainable future.

Rohit Mathur, COO, IVAS Electricals & Appliances

> *With innovations in energy efficiency already transforming our environments, we are not just building cities for tomorrow, we are creating sustainable ecosystems that benefit both people and the planet.*

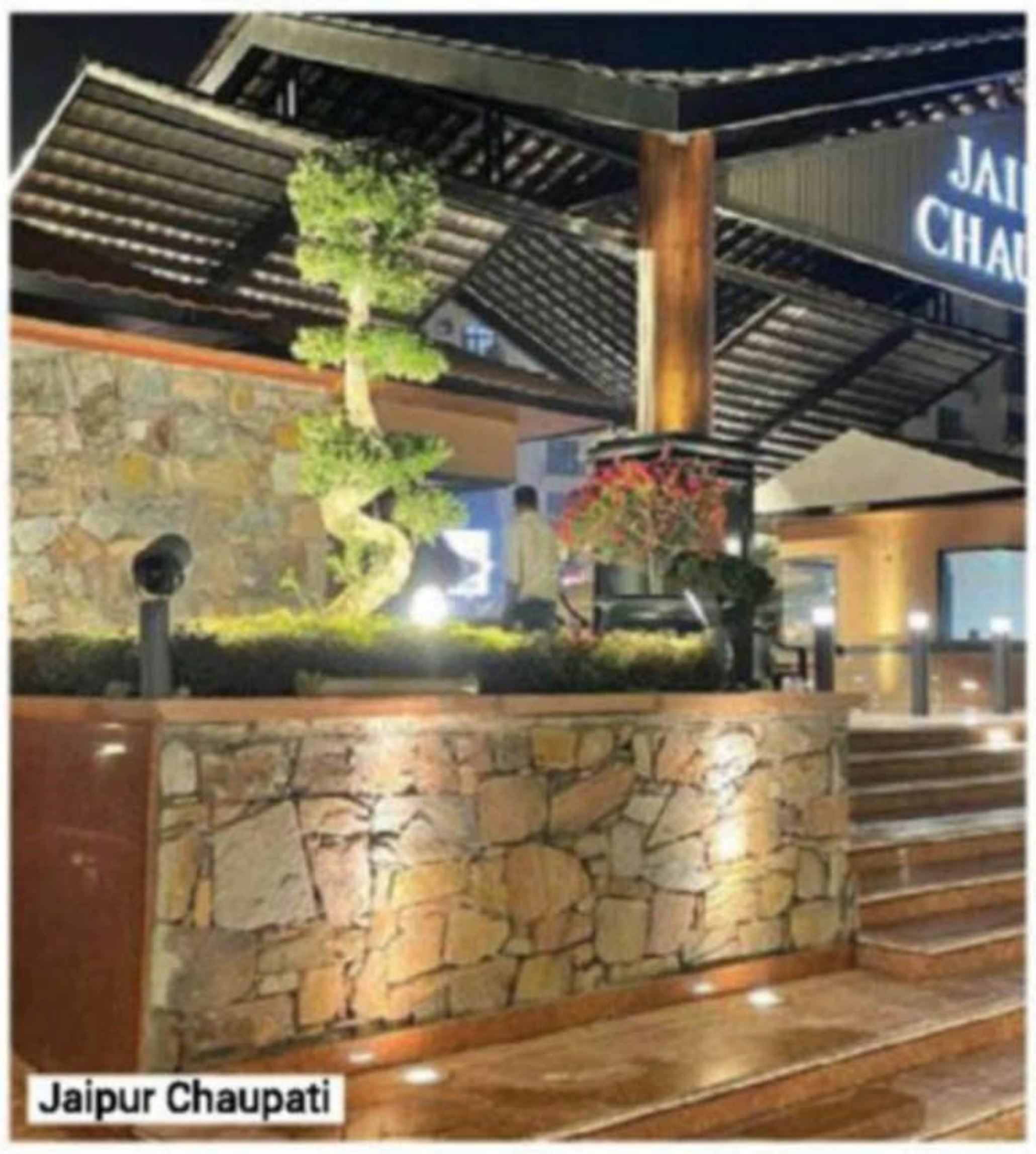
Building Sustainably Smart Cities with Design

Additionally, in urban planning, design and aesthetics play a crucial role in shaping a functional and visually appealing environment. Finishes including matte or metallic enhance the urban landscape, creating spaces that are not only practical but also beautiful. Well-designed public areas and infrastructure elevate the quality of life, blending modern aesthetics with sustainability to build cities that inspire and support their inhabitants.

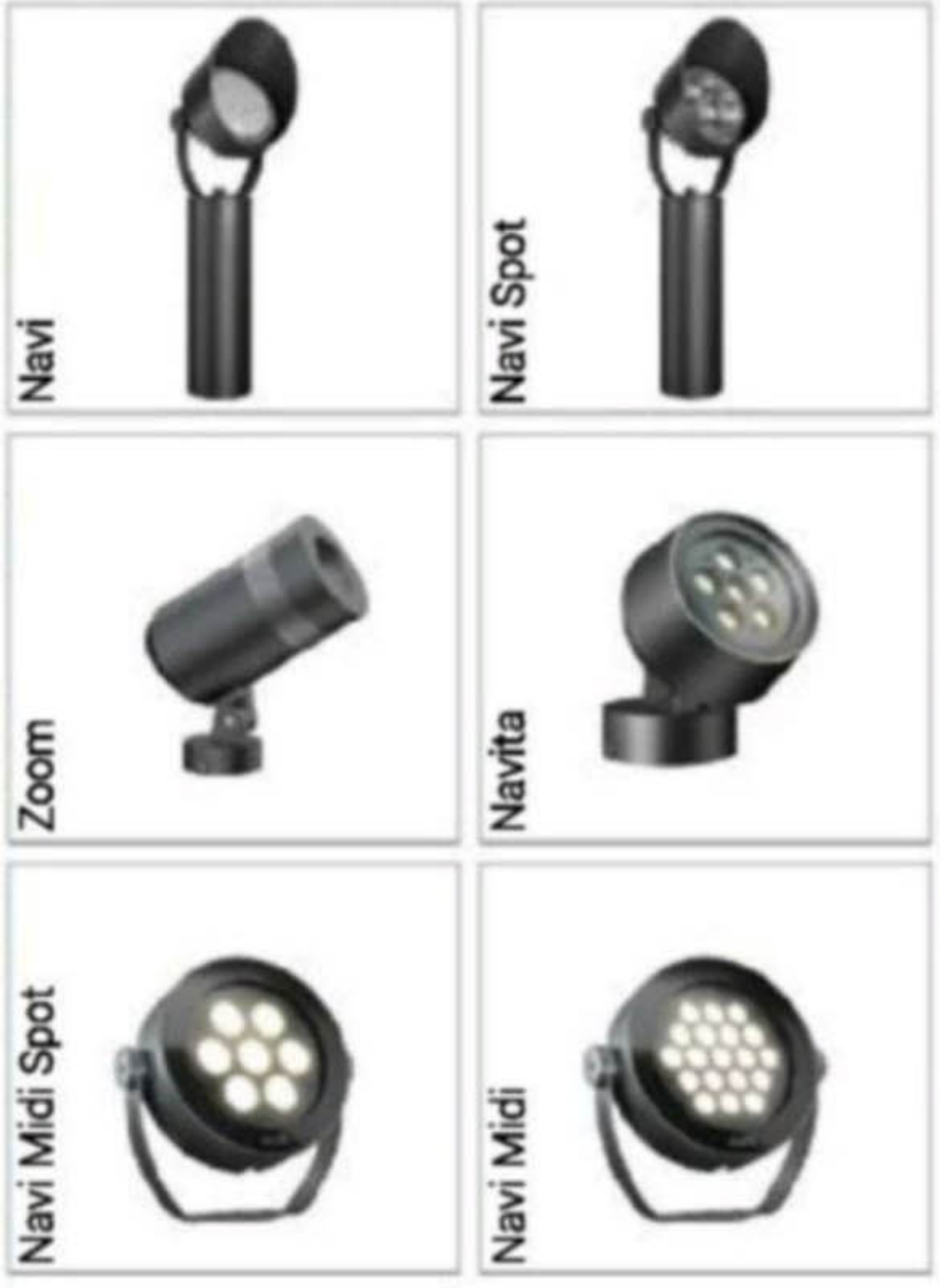
The future of urban living hinges on integrating energy-efficient solutions that enhance comfort and drive sustainability. As India's Smart Cities vision unfolds, the focus on eco-friendly technologies, across homes, streets, and public spaces has never been more crucial. With innovations in energy efficiency already transforming our environments, we are not just building cities for tomorrow, we are creating sustainable ecosystems that benefit both people and the planet.

Landscape Redefined

K-LiTE


Jaipur Chaupati

Flood Light Series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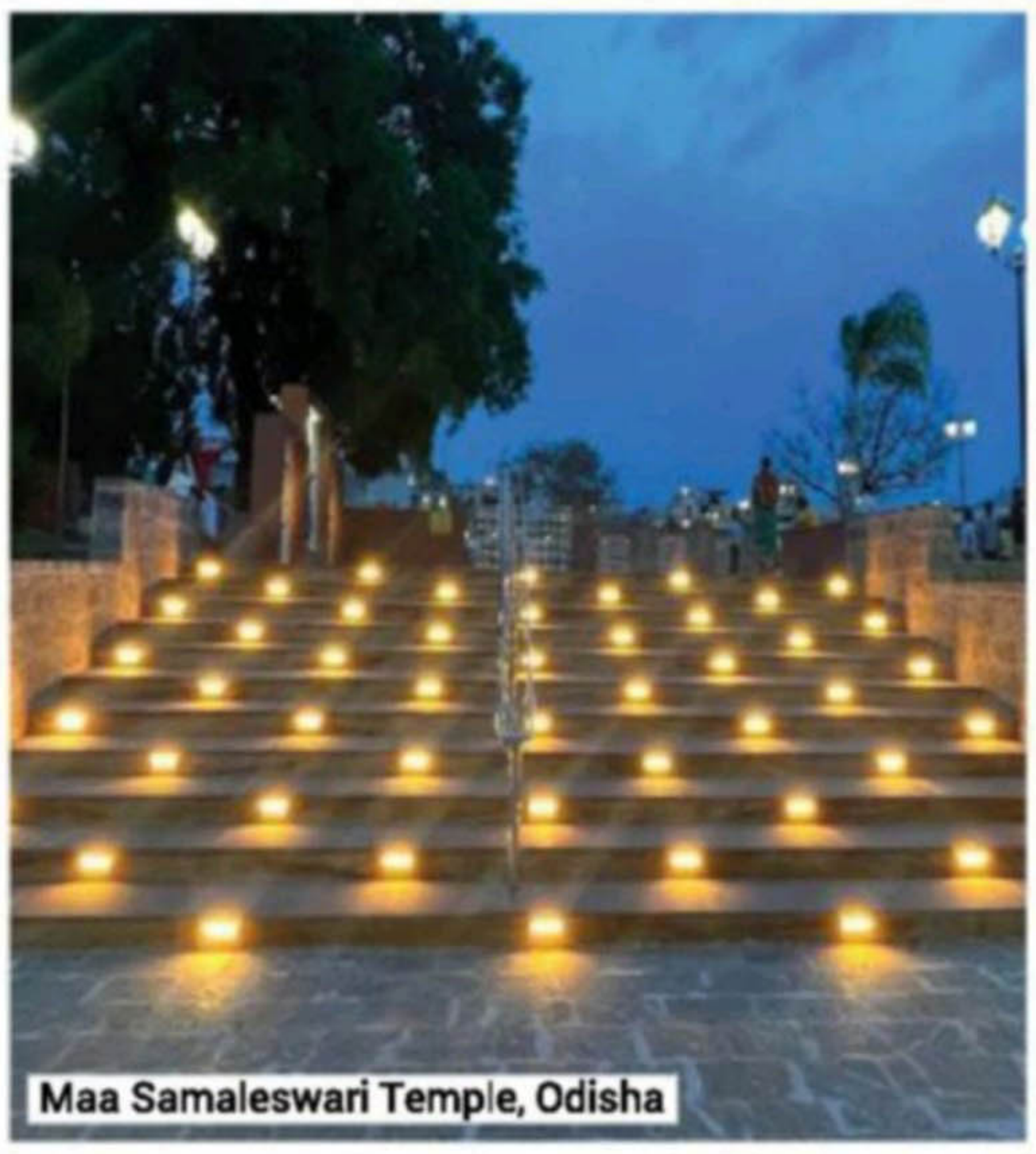
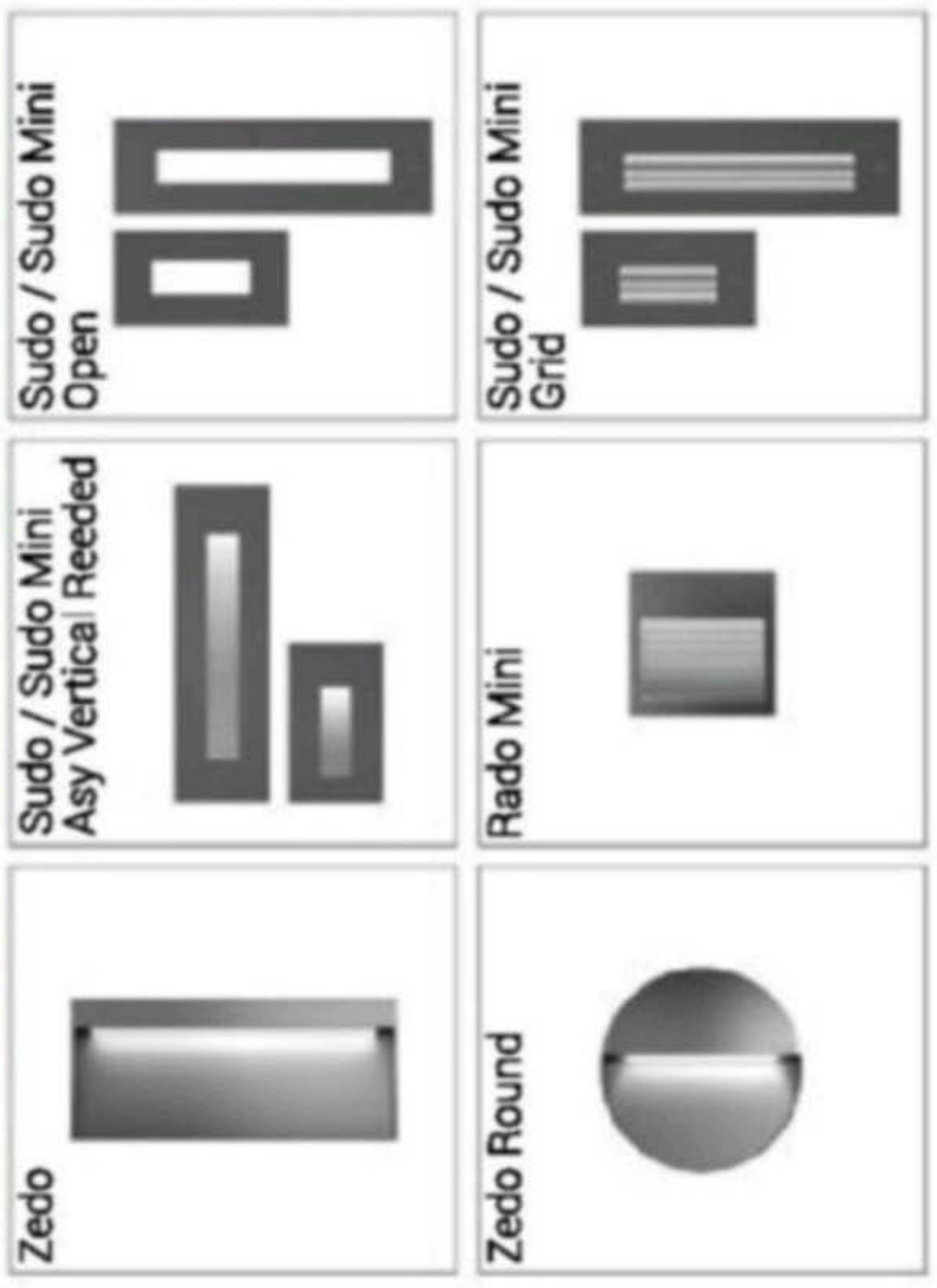

Maa Samaleswari Temple, Odisha

Path Finder Series


Sudo / Sudo Mini Open
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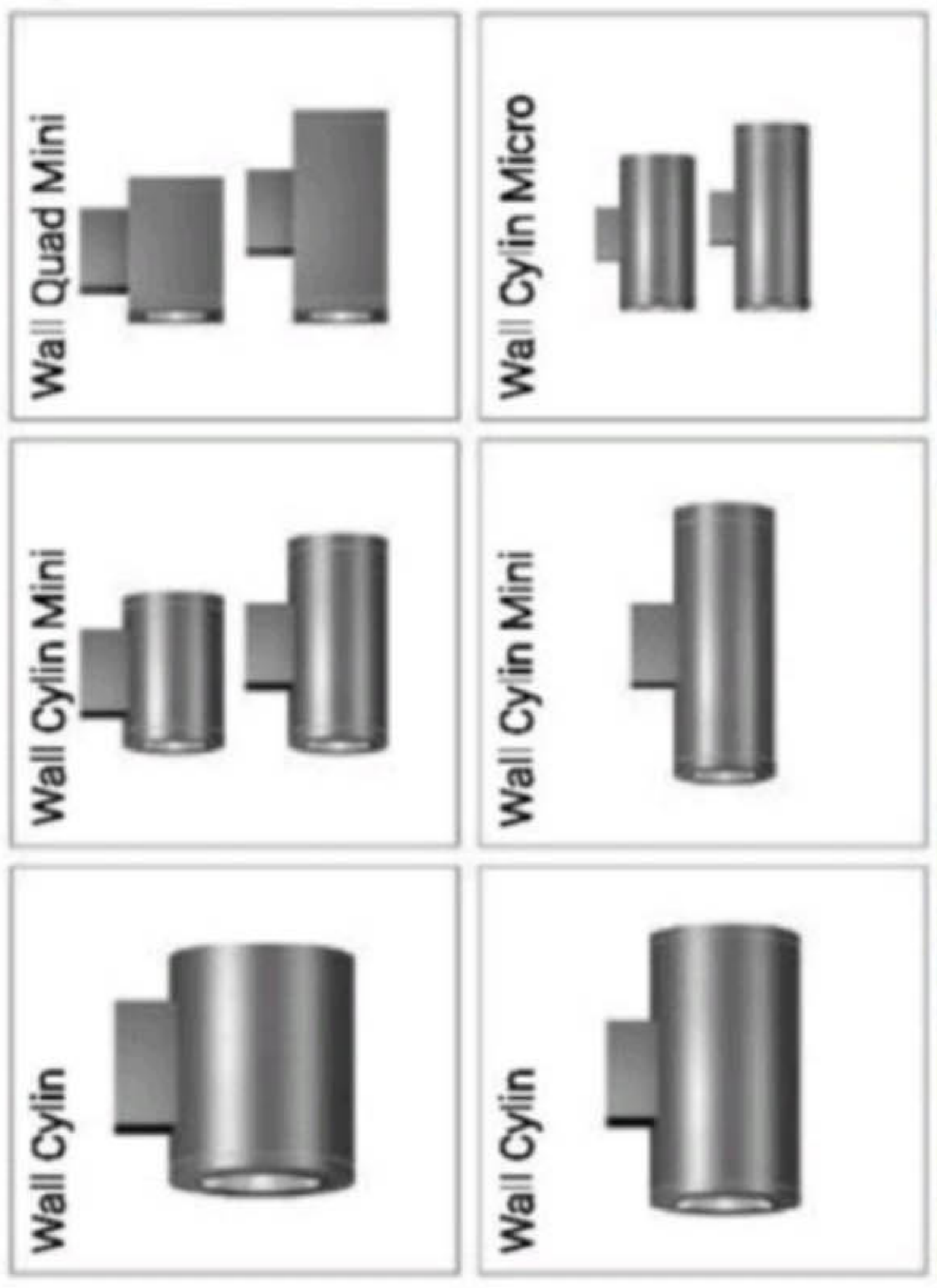
Up Down Series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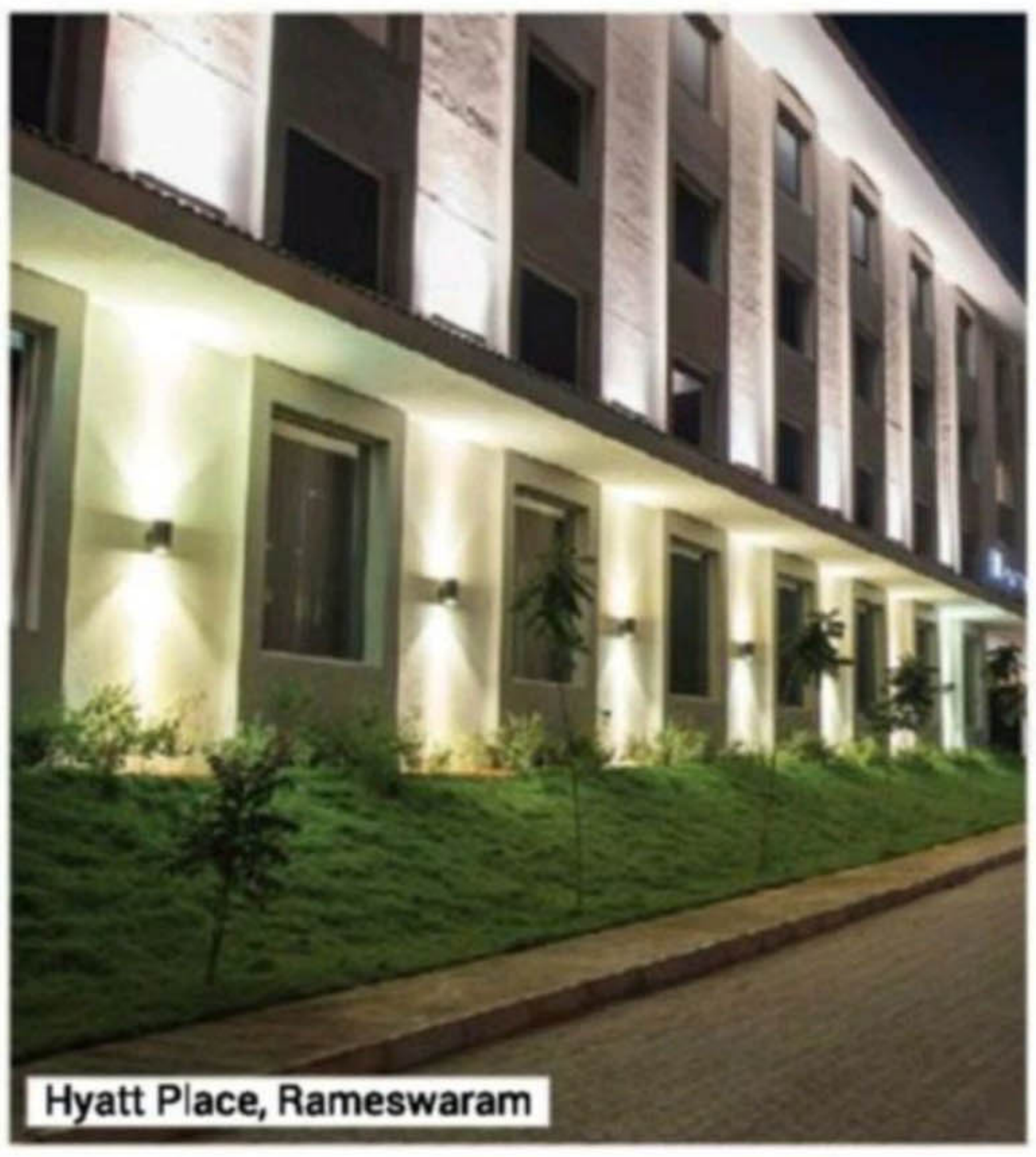
Hyatt Place, Rameswaram

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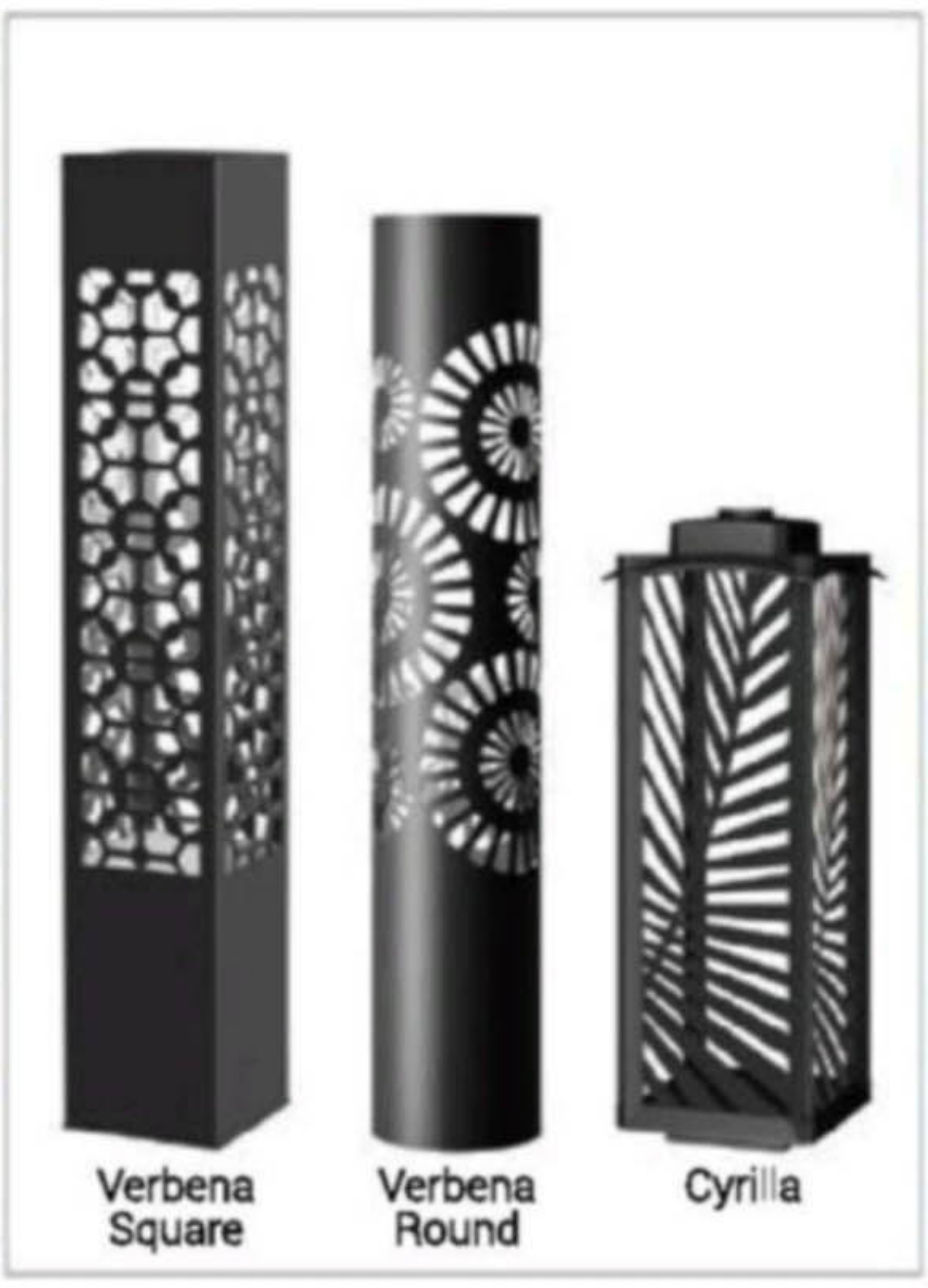
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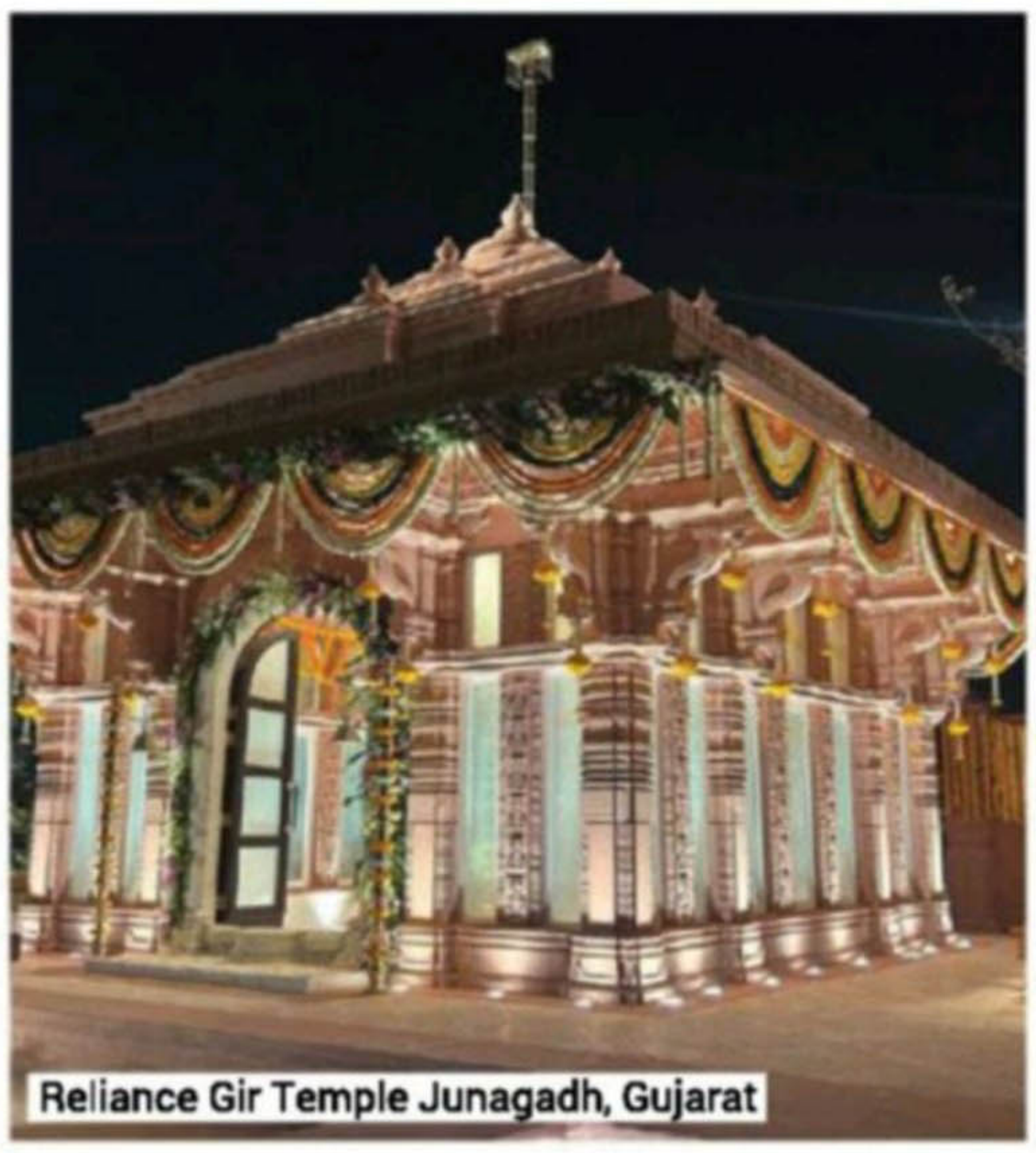
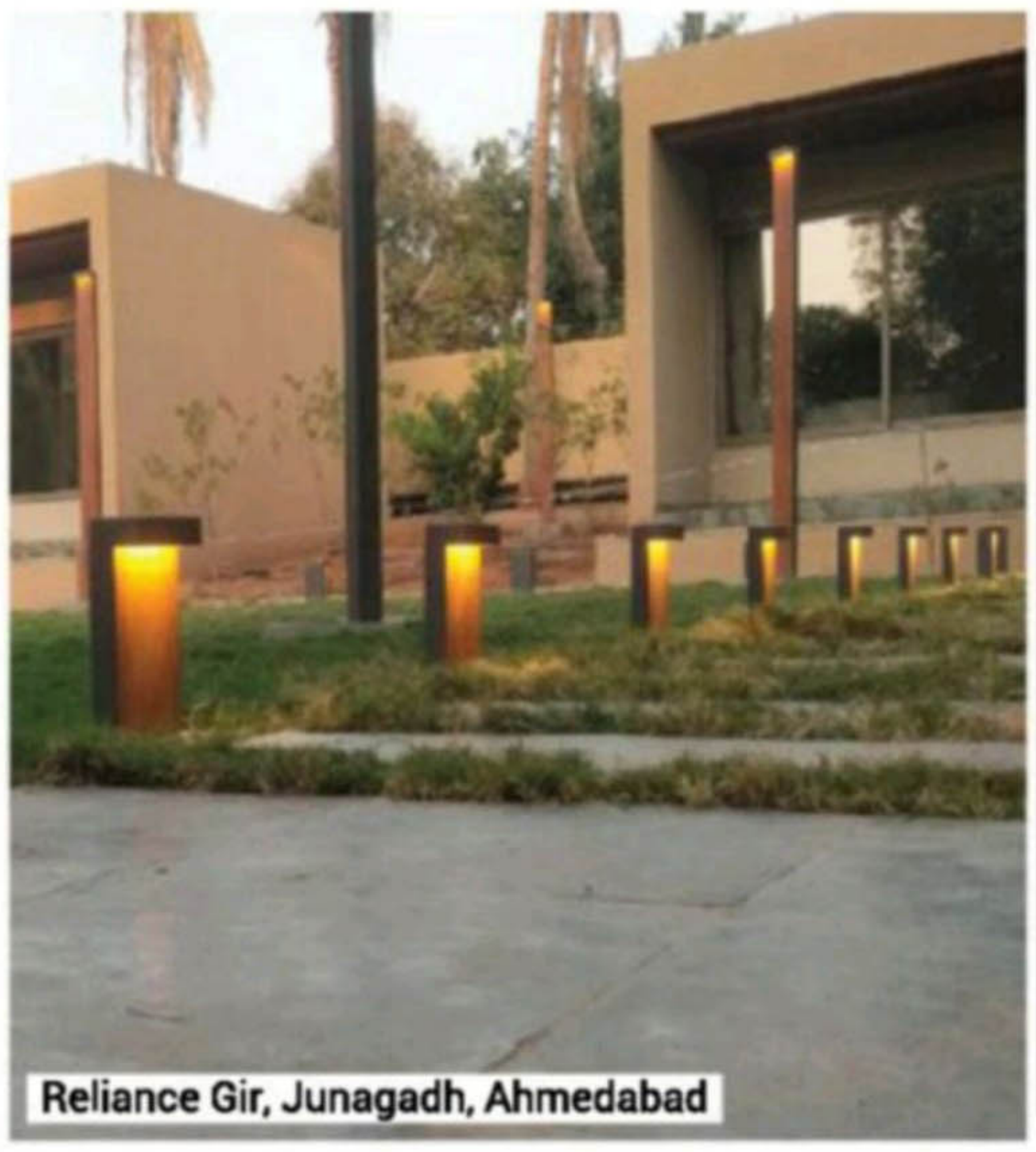
Verbena Round
Cyrilla

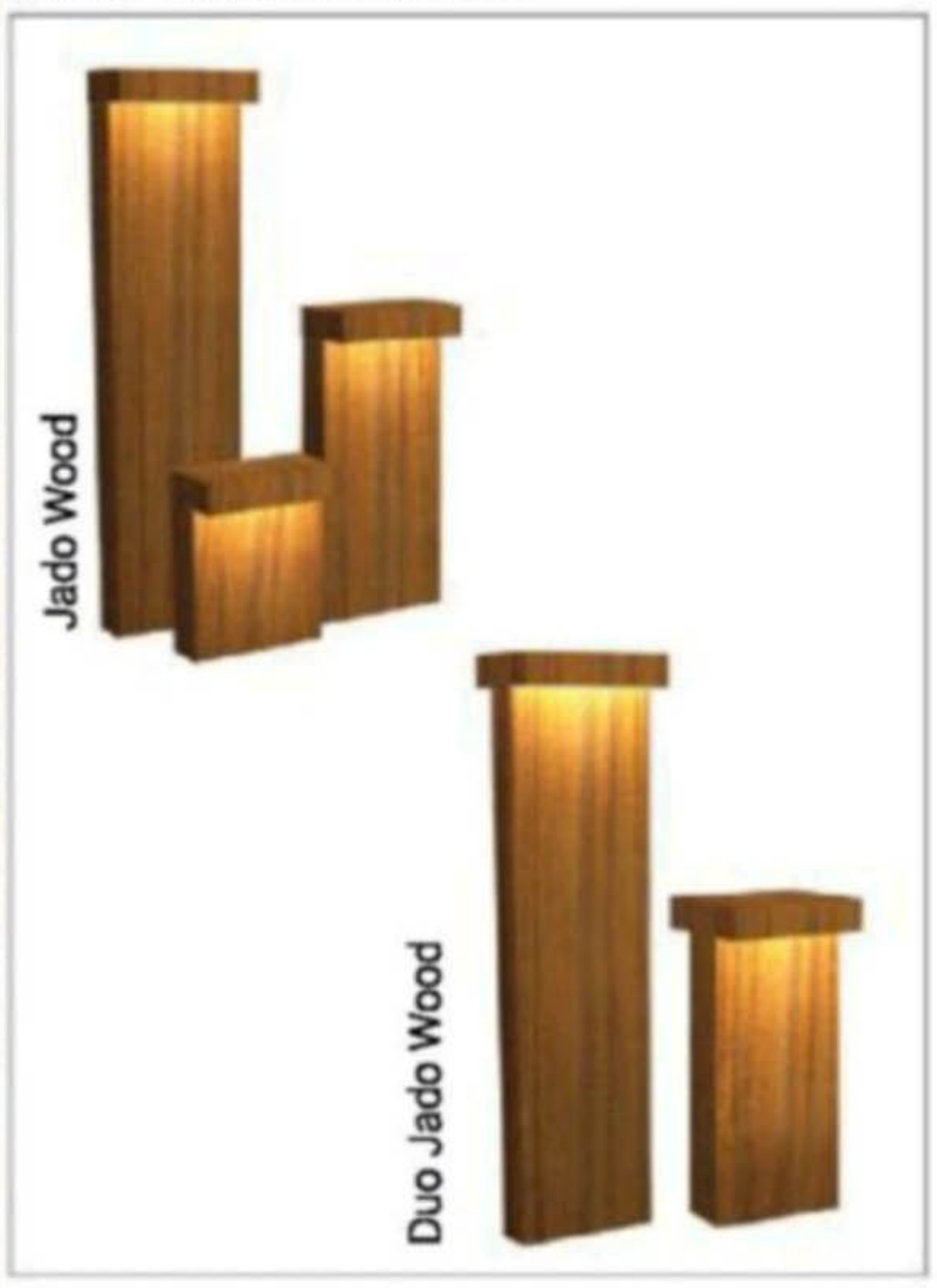
Visakhapatnam Port Trust Cruise Terminal


Reliance Gir Temple Junagadh, Gujarat

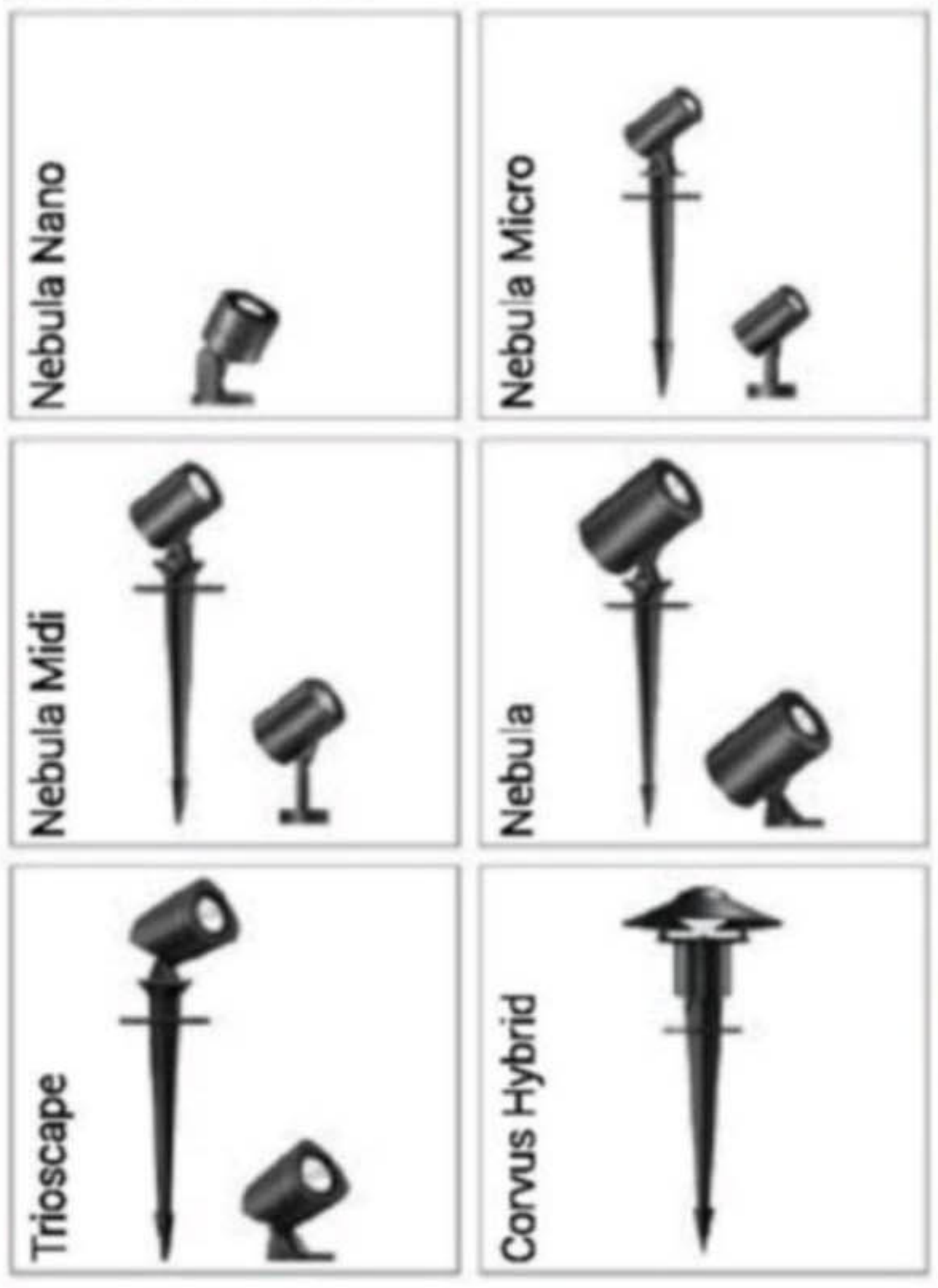
In-Ground Series

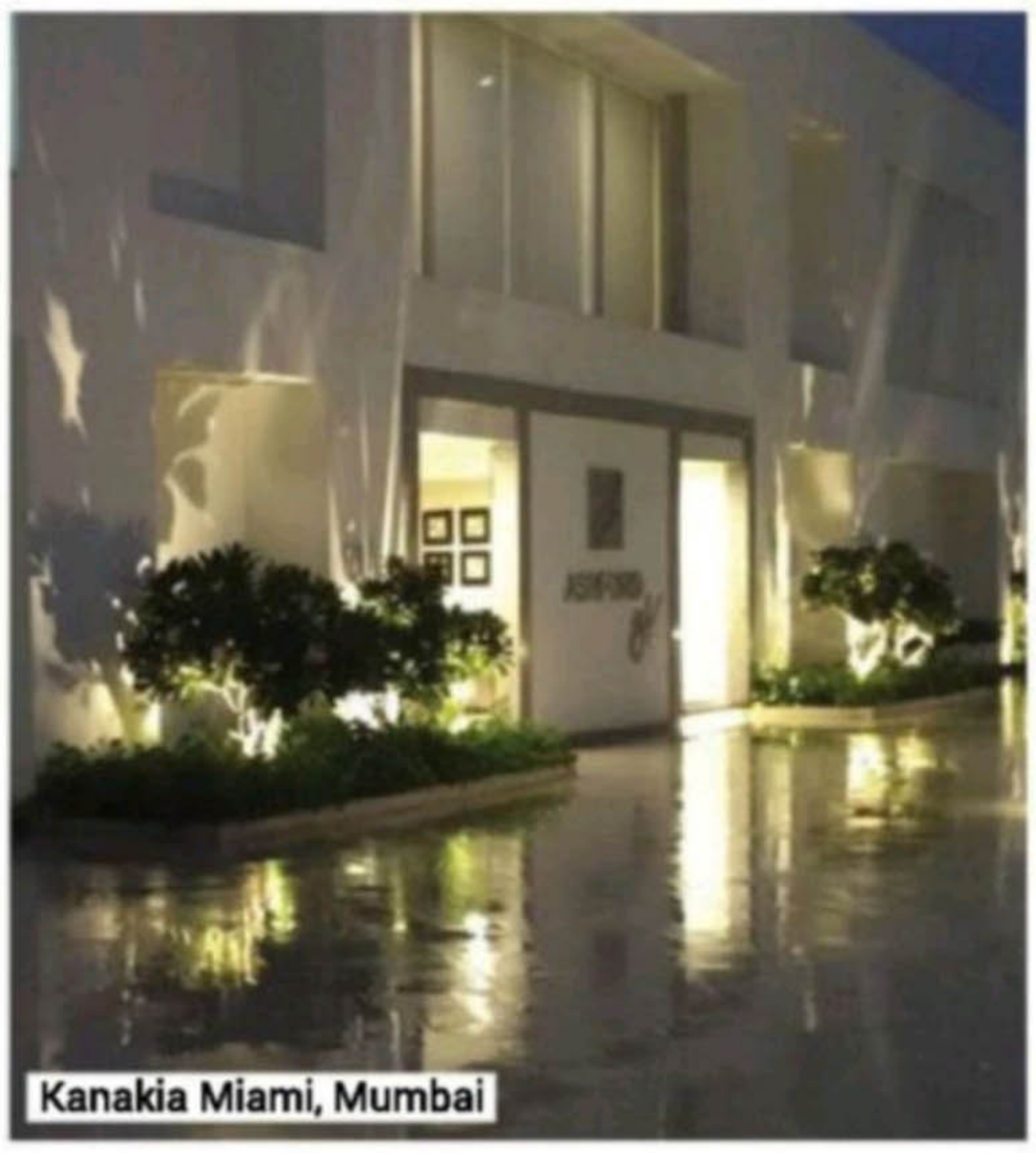

Reliance Gir, Junagadh, Ahmedabad

Jado Wood Bollards

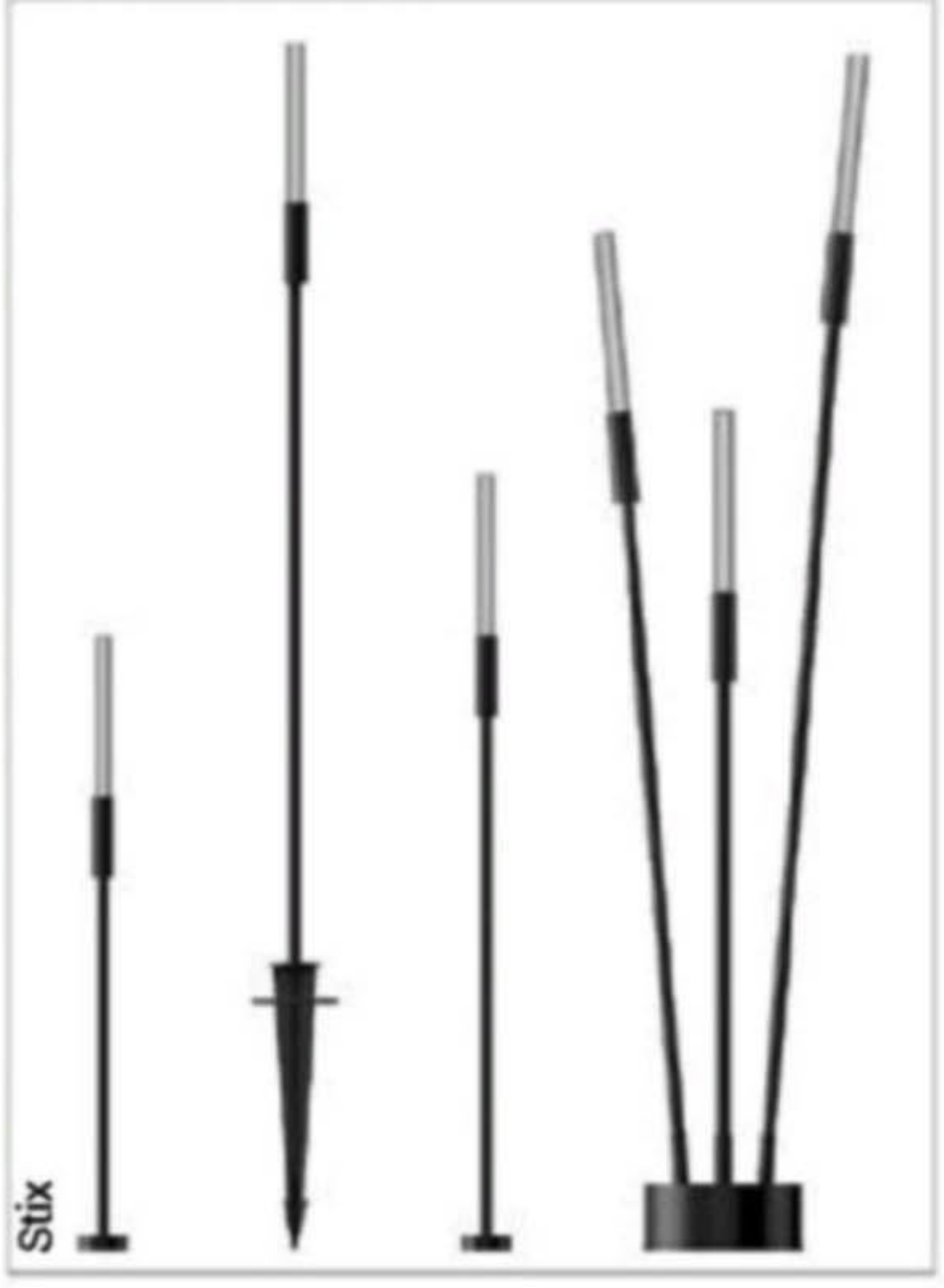

Jado Wood
Duo Jado Wood

Nebula Series


Nebula Nano
Nebula Micro
Nebula Midi
Nebula
Trioscape
Corvus Hybrid


Kanakia Miami, Mumbai

Elements Series



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MONISH SIRIPURAPU: SHAPING A MOVEMENT

With the award-winning CoolAnt system and transformative projects like the Pangolin Pavilion, Monish Siripurapu has carved a niche where design, technology, and nature converge. Over cups of coffee and bursts of laughter, Monish takes us on a journey into his world—a world where design is both functional and poetic, a reflection of his commitment to innovation with heart

By Ankita Rathod

Beehive is a terracotta-based natural cooling system for common spaces, using traditional guna pots

Imagine standing in the sweltering heat of a paper factory in Bhadrachalam, Telangana, where the air ripples with oppressive warmth. In the heart of this industrial maze, Monish Siripurapu's latest creation—a cooling installation resembling a cacti—promises relief. This isn't just a technical solution; it's a symbol of his design philosophy: blending sustainability, technology, and compassion.

"We are working on an installation for ITC," Monish begins, describing the outdoor cooling structure designed for one of ITC's largest paper manufacturing plant. "This is a pilot project that could potentially redefine how we address heat stress in industrial environments." The installation, refined tenfold from a previous version in Ahmedabad, is not just about technology but about creating zones of comfort for workers enduring extreme conditions. "It's about health and well-being," he adds.

For Monish, this project isn't merely about technology. It's deeply personal. He recalls his first experience with extreme industrial heat during a visit to a factory in Noida. "I thought the client was exaggerating about the heat stress," he admits with a wry smile. "But when I stood just 15 metres away from a machine blowing hot air, I felt it—a searing, suffocating wave of heat. It wasn't just uncomfortable; it was dangerous." That moment stayed with him, shaping his commitment to creating humane industrial environments.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF IMPERFECTION: RAW YET REFINED

"We've experimented with construction debris, gabion walls, and broken tiles," explains Monish, citing his work for Godrej Conscious Collective as an example of cost-effective, sustainable design. "It's raw and imperfect, but that's the charm. Not everyone likes it initially, but when they see it in person, perceptions change." The cost? "A small installation can start at ₹7–8 lakh, but scalability depends on the design and materials," he notes pragmatically.

Monish Siripurapu in front of The Pangolin 1:1 Pavilion at SPA Delhi, his early art installation raising awareness on pangolin poaching

> “We’ve experimented with construction debris, gabion walls, and broken tiles. It’s raw and imperfect, but that’s the charm. Not everyone likes it initially, but when they see it in person, perceptions change. A small installation can start at ₹7–8 lakh, but scalability depends on the design and materials.”
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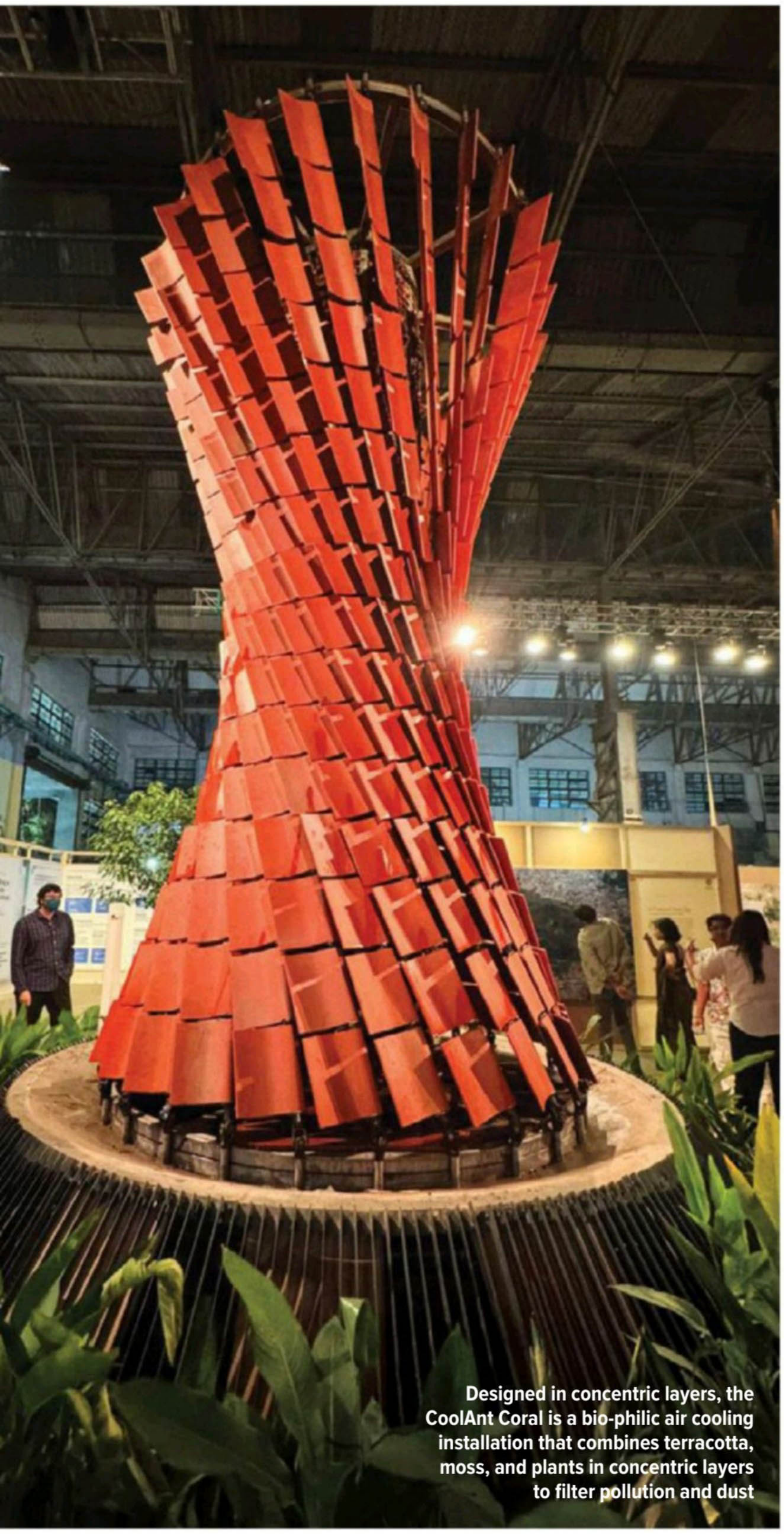


Designed in concentric layers, the CoolAnt Coral is a bio-philic air cooling installation that combines terracotta, moss, and plants in concentric layers to filter pollution and dust

Monish’s installations often blend function with aesthetics. He shares how, in one embassy project, initial doubts about the raw design transformed into admiration upon completion. “It’s a mindset shift,” he reflects. His ability to combine sustainable practices with striking visuals has defined his unique approach.

GROWING UP CLOSE TO MANGO ORCHARDS

Raised amidst the mango orchards of Vijayawada, Monish’s connection to nature was nurtured from an early age. “We’d sleep under the stars on our terrace,” he recalls. “The cool breeze, the sounds of nature—those moments made me realise how soothing and necessary nature is for well-being.” His father, who ran a small offset printing business, emphasized resourcefulness, while his mother championed the value of education. These dual influences—practicality and intellectual curiosity—laid the foundation for his design ethos.

His entry into architecture was serendipitous. “I hadn’t even prepared for the B.Arch entrance,” Monish laughs. “When I got an All-India Rank 35, I was ecstatic. None of us—not even my family—knew much about architecture, but it felt right.” That instinct has served him well, leading to projects that blend futuristic technology with traditional materials.

Moving to Delhi to study at SPA Delhi was a transformative experience—one that starkly contrasted with his childhood. “The pollution, the urban sprawl, the absence of greenery—it made me want to design spaces that brought nature back into cities,” he says.

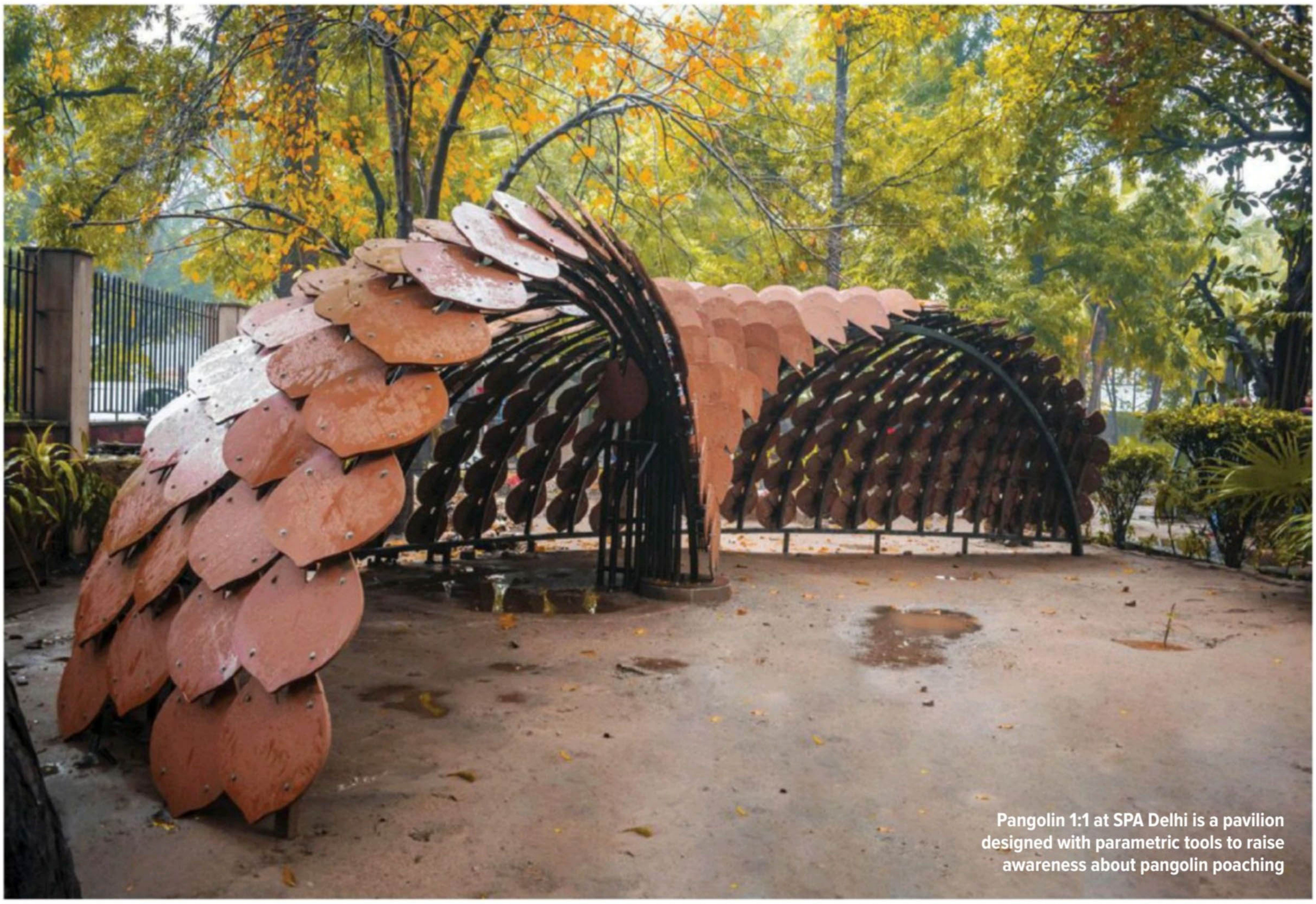
TRADITION MEETS TECHNOLOGY: SIGNATURE PROJECTS

One such project is the Beehive, where he combined computational design with India’s pottery traditions. “I thought, why not use conical pots and terracotta, which are integral to our culture, to create something modern and functional?” Another standout is the Pangolin Pavilion, a terracotta structure inspired by one of the most endangered species. “It was as much about raising awareness as it was about design,” says Monish.

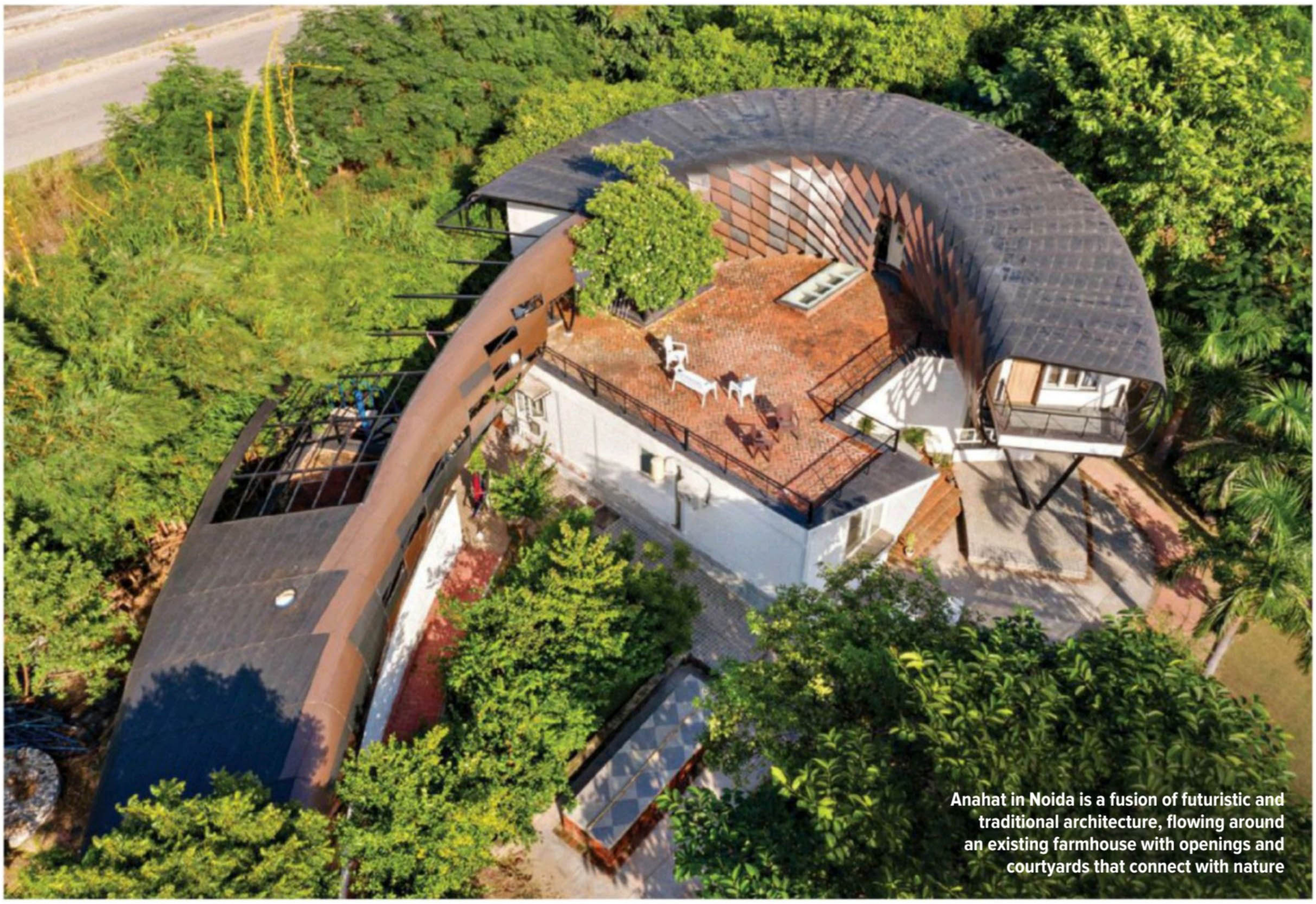
At Anahat Farms, Monish’s ethos of sustainability took centre stage. “The client wanted to demolish an existing structure and start from scratch,” he explains. “But we proposed a solution that reused the materials, saving ₹35 lakh and reducing landfill waste. Every single tile we removed became part of a sculpture within the project.”

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF ANT STUDIO

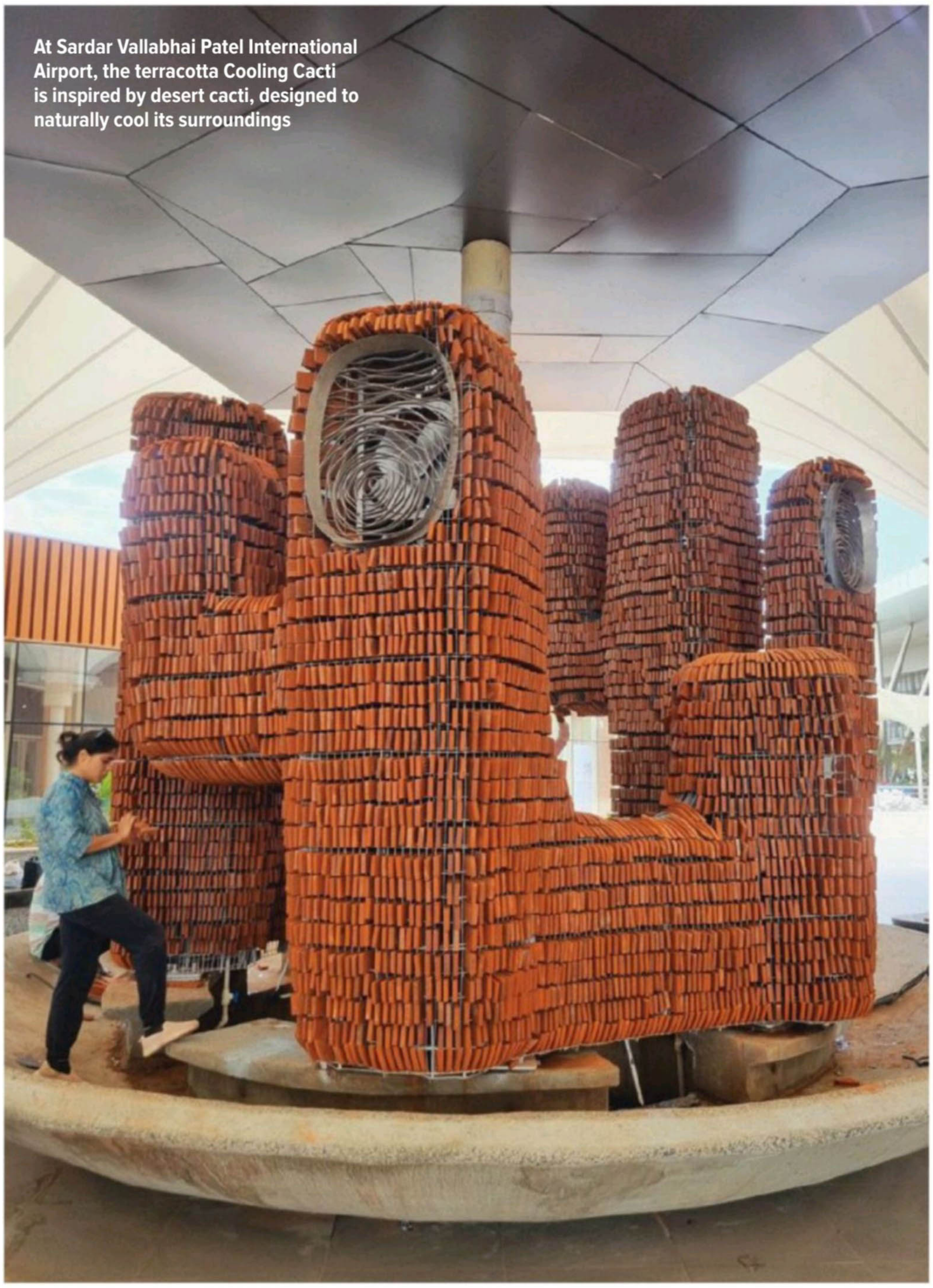
The turning point for Monish’s practice came during his time in Barcelona, where the seeds of ANT Studio were planted. “I remember sitting with a friend near the JAUME metro station, brainstorming my thesis,” he recalls. “We were discussing how ants build their colonies, sculpting landscapes instinctively. That’s when the idea of robots emulating nature’s systems struck me.”



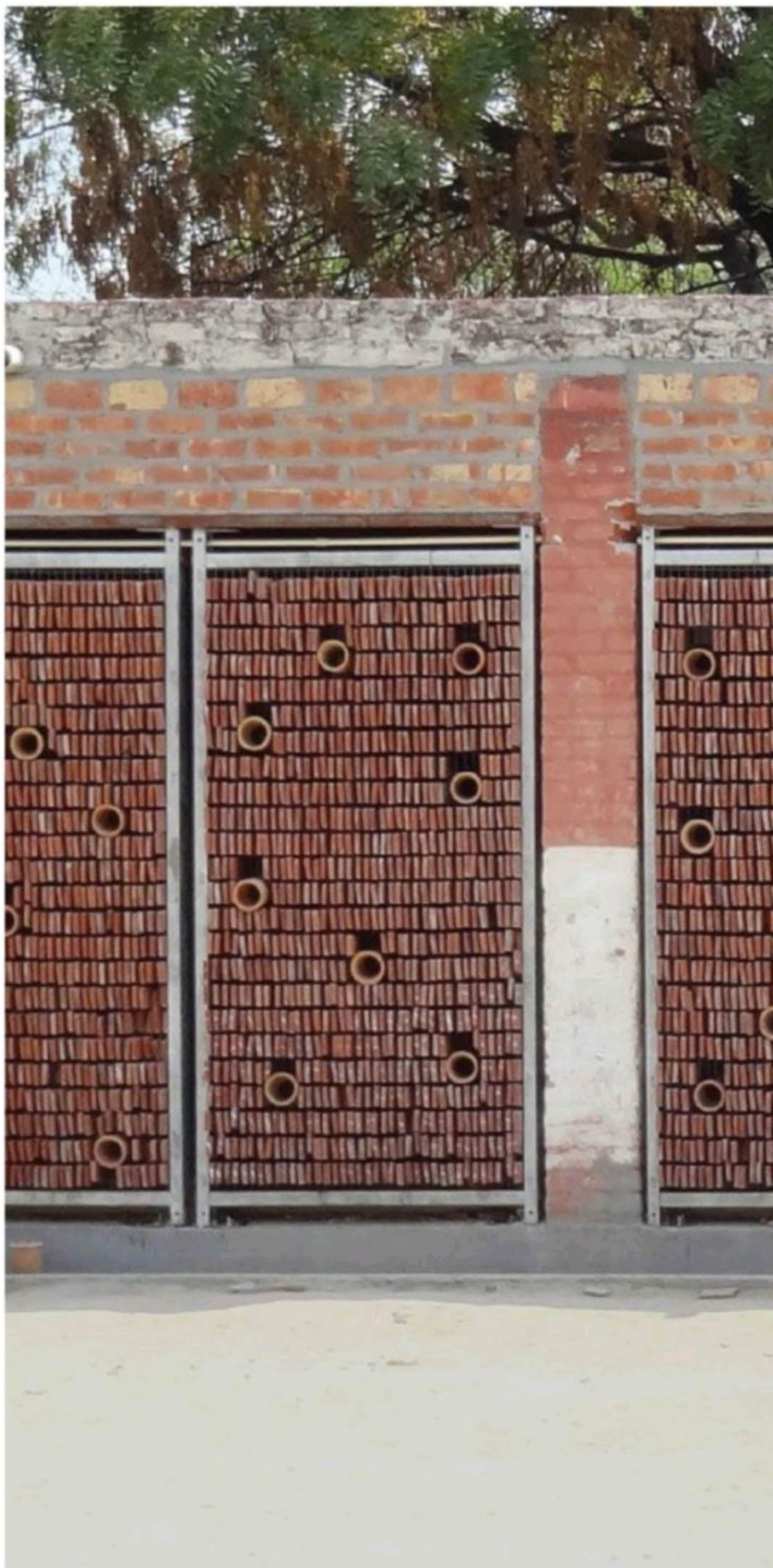
Pangolin 1:1 at SPA Delhi is a pavilion designed with parametric tools to raise awareness about pangolin poaching



Anahat in Noida is a fusion of futuristic and traditional architecture, flowing around an existing farmhouse with openings and courtyards that connect with nature



At Sardar Vallabhai Patel International Airport, the terracotta Cooling Cacti is inspired by desert cacti, designed to naturally cool its surroundings



This idea became the foundation for ANT Studio—a name that pays homage to the small yet mighty insect that inspired his philosophy.

The studio's logo, an ant with a robotic arm, symbolises this ethos. "It was about blending the intuitive beauty of nature with the precision of technology," explains Monish.

TRANSFORMING THE DESIGN PROCESS

For Monish, the conversation around tools and technology often misses the most critical point: that it's not the tools that transform design, but the ideas behind them. "Everything starts with an idea or thought. People should pick the tools that will help them execute their ideas—not the other way around," he says.

His approach is deeply rooted in understanding the essence of design before jumping into execution. "I'm not a good architect because I know how to use tools," he explains. "I'm a good architect because I have ideas. I know what I want to create, and I'll pick the tools that help me get there. Just learning software doesn't make you a good architect."

At ANT Studio, this philosophy is evident in how they operate. "We've cultivated a culture where we use the highest form of technology, but people also spend half their time on-site," Monish says. "Even now, we're a studio of about 30 people, but our workspace accommodates only 15. That's because half the team is always on-site, hands-on, building what we design. They come back, refine the designs, and head back to execute them."

Monish emphasises the importance of balance. "We are architects—we need to build. We are artists, so it has to be hands-on," he adds.

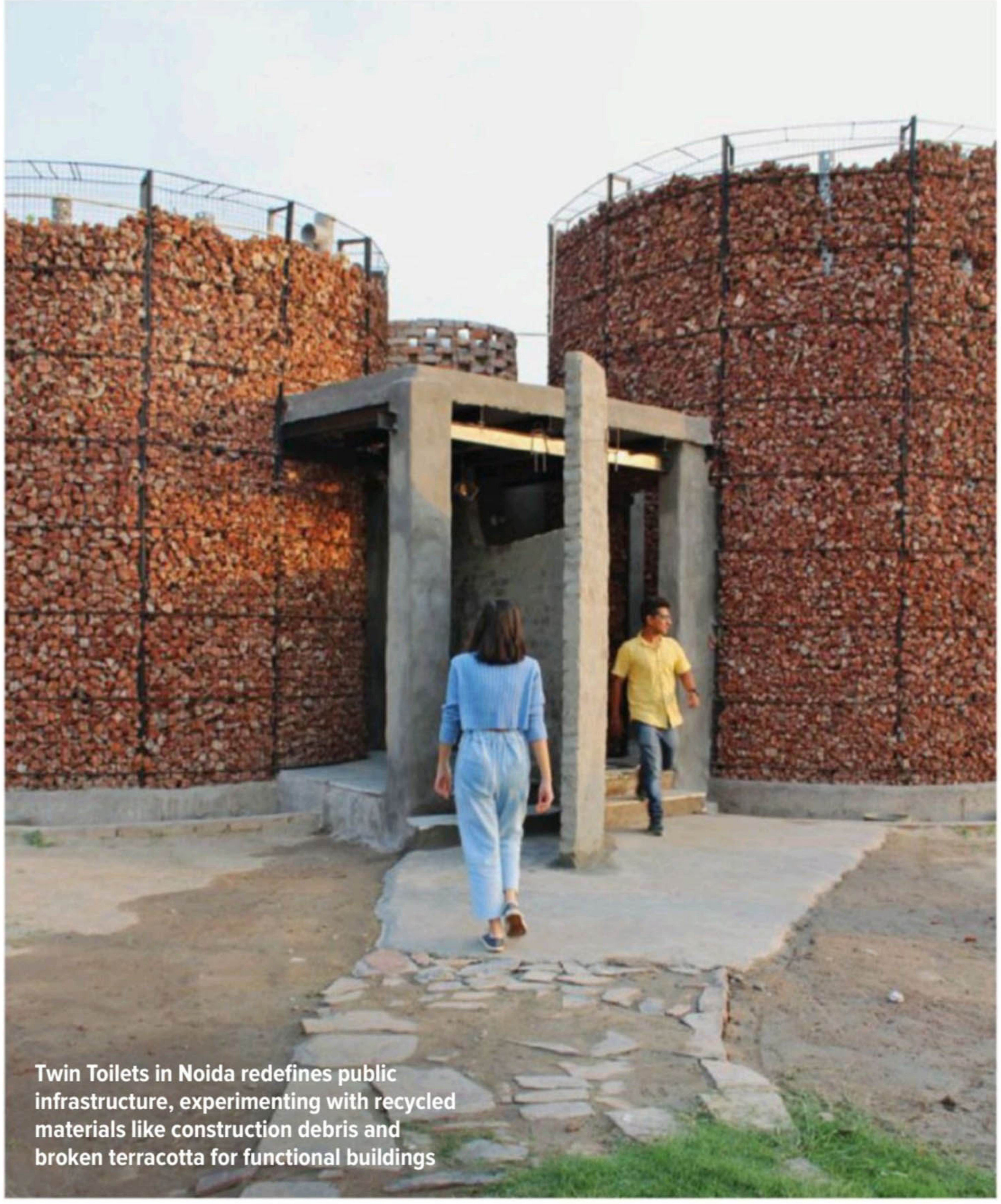
BREAKING BARRIERS: SUSTAINABILITY AND AI

Yet, Monish is acutely aware of the barriers to sustainability in India. "The challenge isn't technology; it's mindset," he says. "Design is a closed community. We need to share knowledge, create awareness, and make architecture relevant to the 99% who can't afford it."

For Monish, the future of architecture lies in embracing AI and spatial intelligence. These technologies, he believes, will redefine how architects approach projects and help democratise design.

Focusing on architecture that promotes education, awareness, and community resilience, the CoolAnt at Vidya & Child NGO in Noida

> “Imagine AI agents that can handle the heavy lifting of site research An AI could gather data on climate, material availability, topography, and even the flora and fauna of a site. It would compile actionable insights, giving architects a solid foundation for contextual and sustainable design.”
>
> —MONISH SIRIPURAPU



Twin Toilets in Noida redefines public infrastructure, experimenting with recycled materials like construction debris and broken terracotta for functional buildings

QUICK TAKES

Where did you grow up?
"Vijayawada, surrounded by mango orchards and starry nights."

What's your educational background?
"Science—maths, physics, and chemistry—before pursuing architecture at SPA Delhi."

Favourite materials to work with?
"Terracotta, bamboo, lime, and Indian stones."

A book you'd gift a young architect?
"Zero to One by Peter Thiel."

Favourite travel destination?
"Ladakh for its vast, untouched landscapes. Everyone should experience driving or biking through the mountains at least once in their life. It's pure magic."

Coffee shop or beach to relax?
"Coffee shop for sketching and ideation, but the beach is my escape for unwinding."

Favourite football team?
"FC Barcelona. Messi's my all-time favourite—he's incredible.

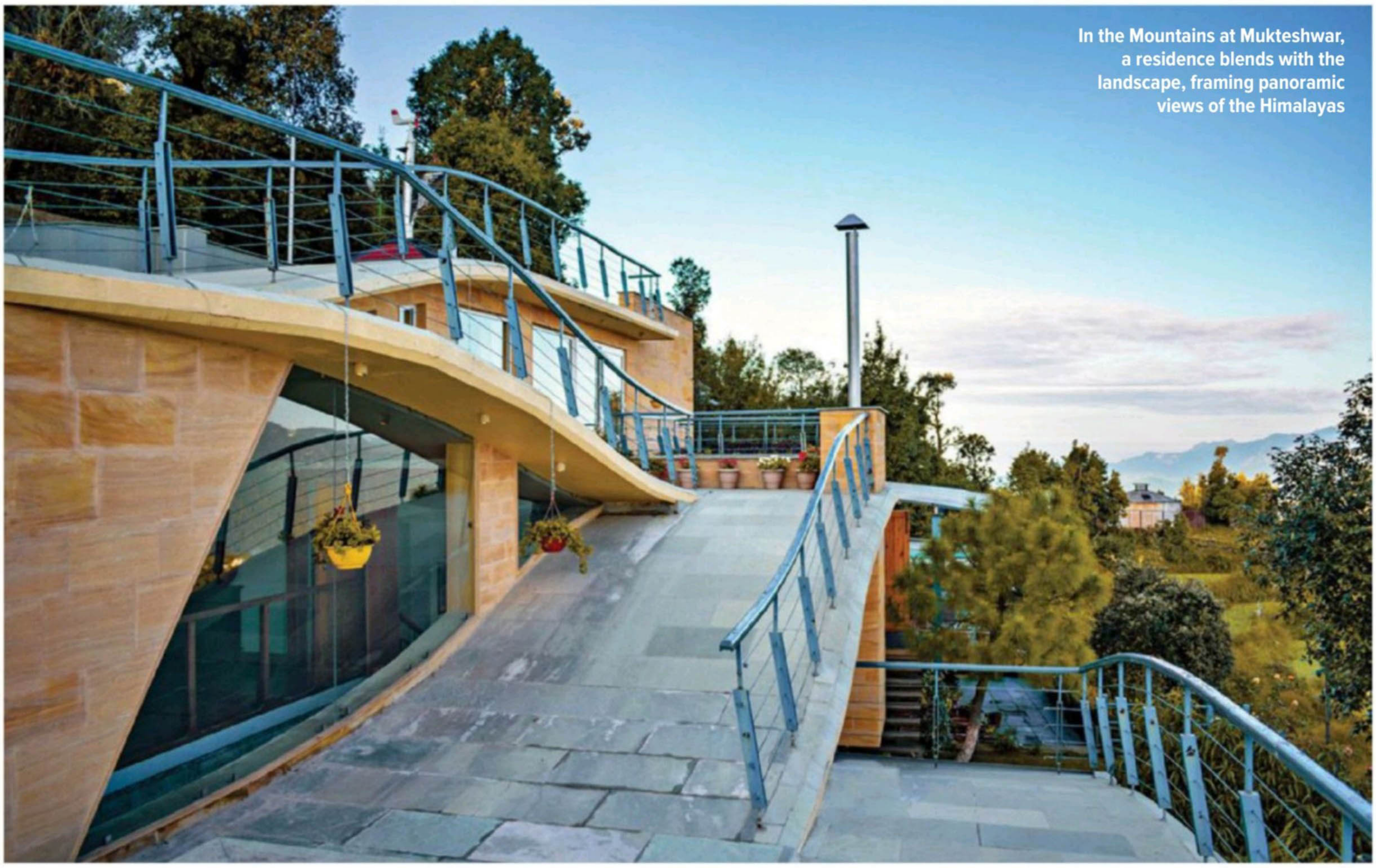
Biggest regret?
"Not watching Messi play live during my time in Barcelona. I lived there during Messi's peak years—2015 and 2016—but didn't watch a single match. Now I look back and think, "What was I doing?!"

Your biggest inspiration in architecture?
"Geoffrey Bawa for his seamless integration of landscapes, Antoni Gaudí for his artistic vision, and Santiago Calatrava for his kinetic and structural genius."

What's your vision for the architecture community?
"To democratise design—make it accessible for the 99% who can't afford architects. We need to break out of our closed bubbles."

If not an architect, what would you have been?
"Probably an engineer or roboticist—I've always loved technology."

Favourite childhood memory?
"Sleeping under the stars on our terrace, surrounded by nature. It taught me the beauty of simplicity."



In the Mountains at Mukteshwar, a residence blends with the landscape, framing panoramic views of the Himalayas

> “
>
> Picture this: standing on-site with augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) tools, you can visualise a building's design in its final form, make adjustments on the spot, and skip the back-and-forth of traditional planning. You'd be designing in real-time, directly within the environment.”
>
> —MONISH SIRIPURAPU

“Imagine AI agents that can handle the heavy lifting of site research,” says Monish, his voice brimming with excitement. “An AI could gather data on climate, material availability, topography, and even the flora and fauna of a site. It would compile actionable insights, giving architects a solid foundation for contextual and sustainable design.”

But Monish's vision extends beyond research. His idea of spatial intelligence integrates AI and IoT sensors to allow real-time interaction with spaces. “Picture this: standing on-site with augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) tools, you can visualise a building's design in its final form, make adjustments on the spot, and skip the back-and-forth of traditional planning. You'd be designing in real-time, directly within the environment,” he explains.

For Monish, it's not just about adopting tools; it's about transforming mindsets. “These technologies can empower architects to create more fluidly and inclusively. The day we stop designing for just 1% of the population and start using these advancements to address the needs of the other 99%, that's when architecture will truly be impactful.”

SHAPING A MOVEMENT

As our conversation winds down, Monish's aspirations for ANT Studio come into focus. “I want us to be a practice that's socially relevant, addressing issues of people and climate,” he says. Upcoming projects, though under wraps, promise to push these boundaries further. And while his inspirations—Geoffrey Bawa, Antoni Gaudí, Santiago Calatrava—reflect his global outlook, Monish's heart remains rooted in India, crafting designs that hug the ground, honour tradition, and embrace the future.

It's a philosophy that resonates not just in his work but in his life. Whether sketching in a coffee shop, reminiscing about missed Messi matches in Barcelona, or advocating for open-source design, Monish Siripurapu embodies a rare blend of humility and ambition. In a world of rigid definitions, he remains fluid, much like the natural forms he so admires. And in doing so, he's not just designing spaces—he's shaping a movement. ✚

A TREE OF POSSIBILITIES

With a strong emphasis on sustainable craftsmanship and innovation, Orange Tree is carving a new path in the world of furniture design

With a vision to bring world-class designs to India, Orange Tree's founder, Gaurav Jain set out to create a brand that prioritises craftsmanship and eco-friendly practices. In this conversation, we dive into the story behind the brand, its design philosophy, the sustainable practices driving its growth, and much more.

Tell us a bit about yourself — your tryst with design and how the brand Orange Tree came about?
"Make in India, made for the world" is a mantra that drives Orange Tree's commitment to sustainable design and craftsmanship. Inspired by my father, Mr. Vinay Kumar Jain, who founded Basant in 1998, we have left mark in 17 countries, collaborating with global giants like Crate & Barrel and Zara Home. With the vision to bring world-class designs to India at accessible prices, I launched Orange Tree in 2014 in Jodhpur. Recognising a gap in the market for contemporary, high-quality furniture, Orange Tree focuses on sustainable materials and innovative designs. We started with a flagship store in Hyderabad, expanded to Bengaluru, and are now excited to bring our offerings to Ahmedabad.

What was it about design that inspired you?
Design has been an integral part of my life from an early age, shaping my passion for creating pieces that harmonise comfort with aesthetic appeal. Inspired by sustainability, Indian craftsmanship and contemporary design principles, I founded Orange Tree to specialise in eco-friendly furniture and home décor. Our products are meticulously crafted from sustainable materials like teakwood, iron, steel and innovative plant-based fibres derived from banana and orange peel. We blend natural materials with artistic flair and practicality, catering to modern tastes while embracing Mediterranean influences and Grecian symmetry.

What's the story behind the name?
"What's growing under the tree?" Growth is at the heart of Orange Tree—not just in crafting sustainable furniture, but in nurturing a philosophy rooted in community and innovation. Just as our roots sustain our foundation in Jodhpur, our branches signify the thriving community of craftsmen evolving alongside us. The leaves symbolise the changing seasons, while the fruits embody renewal and vitality.

What's your design philosophy?
Our design philosophy is rooted in rejecting global trends in favour of an intuitive approach. We prioritise a deep, inward-looking analysis of customer data to understand which designs resonate best with our audience. We recognised a gap in material knowledge among Indian consumers and actively educate them about the specifics of materials used in their products, fostering a deeper appreciation for craftsmanship.

Orange Tree tailors designs to suit Indian preferences, such as incorporating concepts like storage beds and bright fabric on sofas, which are popular locally but less so in international markets.

Take us through the design process for the brand?
Our design process blends innovation, craftsmanship and a deep understanding of customer needs and global trends. Drawing inspiration from diverse sources like fashion, art and film, we focus on creativity rather than just following trends, resulting in unique and aesthetically pleasing designs. We conduct in-depth analysis of customer data, including sales trends and feedback, to understand what resonates with our audience. We explore materials beyond the conventional, incorporating locally sourced resources and traditional techniques. Sustainability is central to our approach, with efforts in waste reduction, upcycling and eco-friendly materials. We balance modern technology with traditional craftsmanship to enhance efficiency and quality, while adapting designs to meet market preferences. We invest in research and development, ensuring continuous innovation and a commitment to exceeding customer expectations with both beautiful and environmentally responsible products.

What are your most popular products?
Our highlights include the Fun and Frolic Edit, featuring serene blues, pinks and whites on plush sofas and chairs made from natural wood; our diverse lamps collection crafted with cotton, raffia and cane; and the Andaman collection in collaboration with Muse Mart, merging tropical elements with a nomadic style. The Toshi furniture line, known for its solid wood and cement pieces, while the Doux Range offers upcycled, handcrafted home decor pieces that bring elegance to interiors.

What new can we expect at Orange Tree?
Through our Raw Foundry initiative, in partnership with Raw Collaborative, we are advancing regenerative design. This initiative empowers young designers to create eco-conscious designs that help regenerate ecosystems. Recently, at our Jodhpur showroom and factory, we gathered designers, educators and industry experts to launch Raw Foundry, showcasing sustainable furniture and materials like recycled wood, bamboo and natural fibers.

Can you tell us a bit about how the brand is engaging with the artisans and making craft relevant for contemporary times?
Orange Tree integrates traditional Indian craftsmanship into its contemporary designs, employing skilled weaving techniques such as cane weaving, sabai and jute weaving. By collaborating closely with regional craftsmen, we not only preserves traditional Indian crafts but also innovate them for contemporary relevance, empowering artisans to adapt and evolve within a modern framework. This strategic partnership ensures that each piece embodies both artistic excellence and environmental responsibility, appealing to a global audience seeking stylish and sustainable decor solutions.

What's your vision for Orange Tree?
Our core conviction is that action today shapes the future, and at Orange Tree, we embody this ethos as a lifestyle brand committed to inventive, eco-friendly and culturally diverse home decor. Our vision is to elevate Orange Tree into a household name synonymous with quality, originality, and environmental consciousness. Our design philosophy revolves around constant innovation, driving us to explore new materials, techniques, and collaborations that push the boundaries of what's possible in home decor. To expand our reach and attract a broader consumer base, we are strategically expanding our online presence and exploring new markets both locally and internationally. Our aim is to cultivate a loyal customer following by consistently delivering quality products and unwavering commitment to sustainability. ✢

Abacus Bed Queen Size

Abacus Book Shelf

Abacus Coffee Table

Abacus Dining Chair

BAU
BAU
BAU
Tickets
Upgrading existing structures.

BEST OF BAU 2025

From groundbreaking materials to robotics that made sci-fi look outdated, BAU 2025 had it all. With Schueco leading the charge, the event became the ultimate playground for global and Indian architects, where innovation met collaboration, and the future of design was written in real time

Reported by Ankita Rathod

Architects and designers from across the globe gathered at Messe München in Munich for BAU 2025, exploring cutting-edge innovations in architecture and construction

SCHÜCO
FLAME
Triangular profile - 14x14 mm
Quarter rod - 15 mm
Half-round rod - 20 mm
Round rod - 20 mm
Flat profile - 10x30 mm

BAU 2025 brought together key building trades and materials under one roof, spanning 18 dynamic exhibition halls

MUNICH, Germany — Braving the icy chill of minus-6 degrees, architects and designers from across the globe converged at the sprawling Messe München for BAU 2025, the renowned international trade fair for architecture, building materials, and construction, held from January 13 to 17, 2025. With over 2,000 exhibitors representing 45 countries, this flagship event transcended the traditional trade fair format—it served as a vibrant manifesto for the future of architecture and design.

As BAU 2025 unfolded, themes of sustainability, digitalisation, and modular construction resonated through its expansive halls, while the Indian delegation brought a dynamic energy, seamlessly blending expertise with a spirit of exploration. For the architects in attendance, the fair was more than just a platform to explore cutting-edge technologies—it was a hub of global collaboration and inspiration. Yet, the event's sheer magnitude could be overwhelming, presenting a marathon of ideas and innovations that demanded both curiosity and endurance.

One such trailblazer was Ahmedabad-based Samarth Maradia, who, with his designer wife by his side, moved through the expansive fairgrounds with practiced ease. Armed with the BAU website folder on his phone and a meticulously planned itinerary, Maradia navigated the event like a seasoned pro, even sharing insider tips on using Munich's public transport free of cost. His efficiency was matched by his curiosity, setting the tone for what lay ahead.

Not far away, Summesh Menon was drawn to advanced window systems, deeply admiring their craftsmanship and potential to elevate architectural design. Walking alongside him, Rupesh Baid was equally immersed, his discerning eye landing on bespoke metal hardware that led to the purchase of a custom-designed door for his latest project. Together, they showcased a perfect balance of appreciation and action.

Elsewhere, Shiv Dada turned the sprawling Messe München into his personal networking playground. Flashing his signature grin, he remarked, "You can't just walk through BAU; you've got to feel the vibe," embodying the camaraderie that defined the Indian delegation's presence. Meanwhile, Siddharth Talwar and Arun Sharma were deep in discussion over modular designs, treating the fair like a masterclass. While Talwar marvelled at the balance of practicality and aesthetics, he pondered how seamlessly these systems could be adapted to the Indian context. Sharma, in contrast, was awestruck by Schueco's precise engineering, particularly their 12-millimetre fenestration systems capable of supporting 100-kilogram glass panels.

As the day unfolded, Sumit Dhawan found himself inspired by outdoor innovations, remarking, BAU allows us to think taller and wider—to understand fenestrations going up to 10 meters, which are not only manual but motorised as well." Nearby, Rudraksh Charan explored Schueco's sustainable retrofitting solutions, recognising immense potential for the Indian market. Reflecting on the intensity of the event, he joked that his survival strategy revolved around "a heavy breakfast and a beer instead of lunch."

Adding another dimension to the delegation's experience, Indrajeet Kembhavi juxtaposed his exploration of cutting-edge solar façades with a visit to the timeless BMW Museum. "It's a marvel of both engineering and architecture," he noted, a reminder of how BAU merged the past and the future in its offerings.

Upgrading existing
structures.
SCHÜCO
VALUEUP

Schueco India team received the prestigious 'Best Team' award in the global sales challenge

Nominated countries
- Belgium
- India
- Japan
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Poland
- Sweden

Shyam Raghunandan, MD, Schueco India (far left), is seen accepting the honour

existing
SCHÜCO
existing

> "Design innovation—bringing global technology to Indian markets with customisation; digitalisation—leveraging technology to improve productivity and safety at job sites; and sustainability—aligning with India's goals to reduce the construction industry's carbon footprint."
>
> —**SHYAM RAGHUNANDAN**, *Managing Director, Schueco India*

SCHUECO: REDEFINING INNOVATION

Among the dazzling exhibits, Schueco's pavilion emerged as a standout. From a separate entrance and thoughtfully curated meals to branded coat racks and seamless transport services, the experience was nothing short of exceptional. "If you weren't invited by Schueco, you didn't get the real experience," attendees joked, underlining the brand's influential presence at the fair.

Shyam Raghunandan, managing director of Schueco India, reflected on the event's energy and significance: "This BAU had a lot of excitement for us. We invited more than 60 architect partners and 60 fabrication partners. The Schueco India team was awarded the 'Best Team' in the global sales challenge, and I couldn't be prouder. A big shoutout to all the tigers and tigresses—#OneTeam made it happen."

Raghunandan highlighted Schueco's strategic focus on three pillars: "Design innovation—bringing global technology to Indian markets with customisation; digitalisation—leveraging technology to improve productivity and safety at job sites; and sustainability—aligning with India's goals to reduce the construction industry's carbon footprint."

The launch of the Venuro System, designed for floor-to-ceiling sliding windows, became a talking point for its ultra-slim profiles and panoramic views. "This system redefines minimalism," Arun Sharma observed. Similarly, the ValueUp Façade System resonated with Indian architects like Kembhavi, who called it "a strategy for sustainable urban development." Schueco's retrofitting systems earned high praise for their ability to align sustainability with innovative engineering. As Charan succinctly put it, "Schueco isn't just reducing emissions—it's reshaping how we think about architecture."

THEMES THAT STRUCK A CHORD

BAU 2025's themes—resilient urban planning, modular construction, and resource efficiency—struck a global chord. Renewable energy solutions like solar-integrated façades and retrofitting systems showcased by Schueco addressed the need to reduce energy consumption in both large-scale commercial developments and smaller community spaces. Emerging brands like Oakio complemented this vision with eco-friendly decking and cladding solutions, reinforcing a commitment to sustainability.

Modular construction took centre stage, with companies like Velux and Knauf presenting prefabricated components designed for affordability without sacrificing aesthetics. Climate resilience was another highlight, with materials from Kingspan and BASF addressing extreme weather challenges. Adding a layer of artistry to modular design, RECKLI's formliners transformed concrete into textured masterpieces. Tying everything together was the emphasis on a circular economy. Innovators like Tarkett, Wienerberger, and Jowat SE

Schueco's pavilion was a major highlight, drawing international attention. From India itself, over 60 architect partners and 60 fabrication partners were among the invitees

Rupesh Baid (And Design Co.) explores bespoke metal hardware and finishes with meticulous attention to detail

pushed boundaries in recycled flooring, bricks, and adhesives, making sustainability a fundamental tenet of future construction.

IMMERSIVE INSTALLATIONS & ROBOTICS

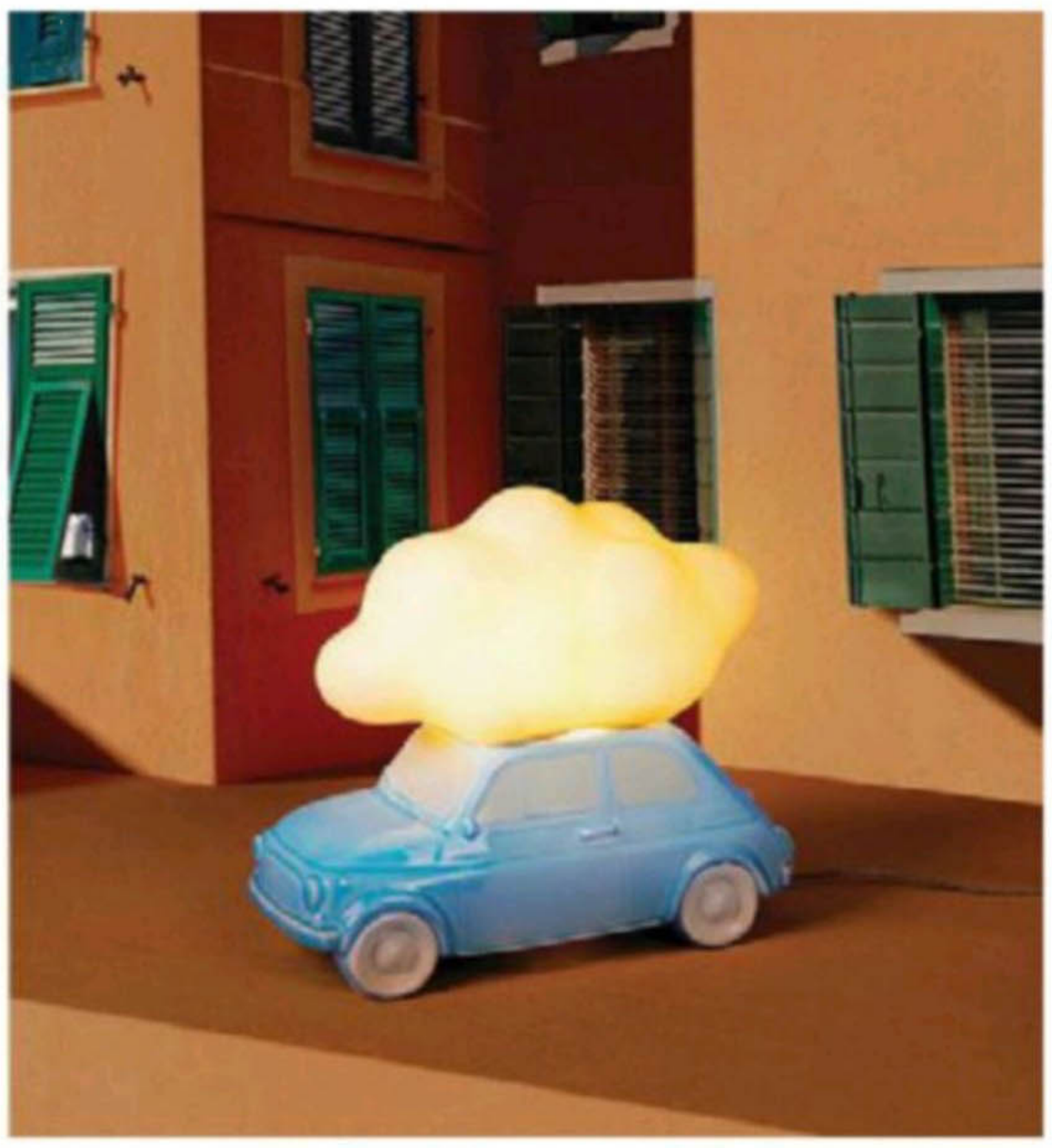
The exhibits at BAU 2025 were nothing short of immersive. From Schueco's Innovative Pavilion to Velux's Biophilic Hub and Knauf's Sustainable Cities Pavilion, each installation was a vision of architecture blending technical innovation with artistic execution. Keynotes from luminaries like Carlo Ratti and Satoshi Ohashi bridged global trends with actionable insights, empowering attendees to embrace transformation.

Robotics stole the show, offering a glimpse into the industry's future. Autonomous 3D printers demonstrated their ability to create intricate structures, while drones showcased real-time site monitoring capabilities. A standout demonstration involved a robot creating intricate, load-bearing brick walls with geometric precision that would be nearly impossible to replicate manually. Additionally, drones equipped with imaging sensors and surveying capabilities demonstrated how technology is revolutionising the industry.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

As BAU 2025 concluded, it became clear that this was more than an architecture fair—it was a blueprint for the future. For Indian architects, the experience was as much about camaraderie as it was about discovery. Each interaction, each innovation, sparked fresh ideas and perspectives. Schueco's trailblazing innovations, from the Venuro and ValueUp systems to their retrofitting solutions, reinforced their reputation as leaders in sustainable design. Shyam Raghunandan's words encapsulated the event's impact: "This BAU wasn't just a showcase—it was a movement, a step towards reshaping architecture in India and beyond." As the sun set over Munich's skyline, BAU left attendees energised, ready to translate inspiration into action. For those who missed it, anticipation for BAU 2027 has already begun!

Editorial Director Sonal Das (Architecture+Design) with architects Arun Sharma (Atrey & Associates) and Siddharth Talwar (Studio Lotus) at the Schueco booth



THE YEAR OF surreality

Maison et Objet 2025 was a portal into a world where imagination leads, and reality follows. From Faye Toogood's dreamy 'Womanifesto!' to Uchronia's whimsical 'Hotel of Dreams' and BlueCycle's sustainable wave-like armchairs, the fair proved that design thrives at the intersection of creativity and functionality

By Ankita Rathod

The design calendar for 2025 officially began with Maison et Objet, and I found myself navigating a crisp, sunlit Paris morning en route to the exhibition centre. Staying at the iconic Le Bristol, a hotel marking its centenary this year in the illustrious Faubourg Saint-Honoré neighbourhood, offered a sense of poetic continuity between the timeless and the avant-garde. As the hotel's Belle Époque charm unfolded into the bustling streets, it felt like the perfect prelude to a day immersed in the future of design.

Twice a year, Maison et Objet, often likened to the Paris Fashion Week of design, transforms the city into a hive of creativity. This January's edition (16th–20th) attracted an impressive roster of industry heavyweights and design aficionados, converging at the Parc des Expositions near Charles de Gaulle Airport. Seven cavernous halls brimming with 1,800 brands formed a labyrinth of ideas—some daring, some familiar—all promising to shape our living spaces.

SUR/REALITY: A CENTENNIAL REFLECTION

This year's theme, Sur/Reality, paid homage to the 100th anniversary of Surrealism, the avant-garde movement spearheaded by André Breton that sought to free imagination from the constraints of logic and convention. In his 1924 Surrealist Manifesto, Breton wrote, "Imagination alone offers me some intimation of what can be." It was precisely this ethos that Maison et Objet 2025 brought to life.

Walking through Hall 7 felt like stepping into Breton's vision of a world where reality melts into dreams. Mirrored panels created infinite reflections, inviting visitors to see their surroundings anew, while a floating dining table toyed with perceptions of gravity, evoking surrealist plays on the impossible. Dalí's influence was palpable in melting clock-inspired lighting fixtures, and biomorphic furniture pieces blurred the lines between art and function.

Surrealism's fascination with material and texture found modern interpretations here: textured glassware rippled like water, 3D-printed ceramics defied gravity, and upholstery mimicked natural elements such as moss and bark, immersing visitors in a tactile dreamscape.

THE SPIRIT OF SURREALISM IN DESIGN

In his manifesto, André Breton declared, "Everything tends to make us believe that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imagined, the past and the future… cease to be perceived as contradictions." This philosophy resonated deeply at Maison et Objet 2025, where the spirit of surrealism seamlessly merged fantasy and functionality. The What's New? sections embodied this vision, offering captivating reinterpretations of design.

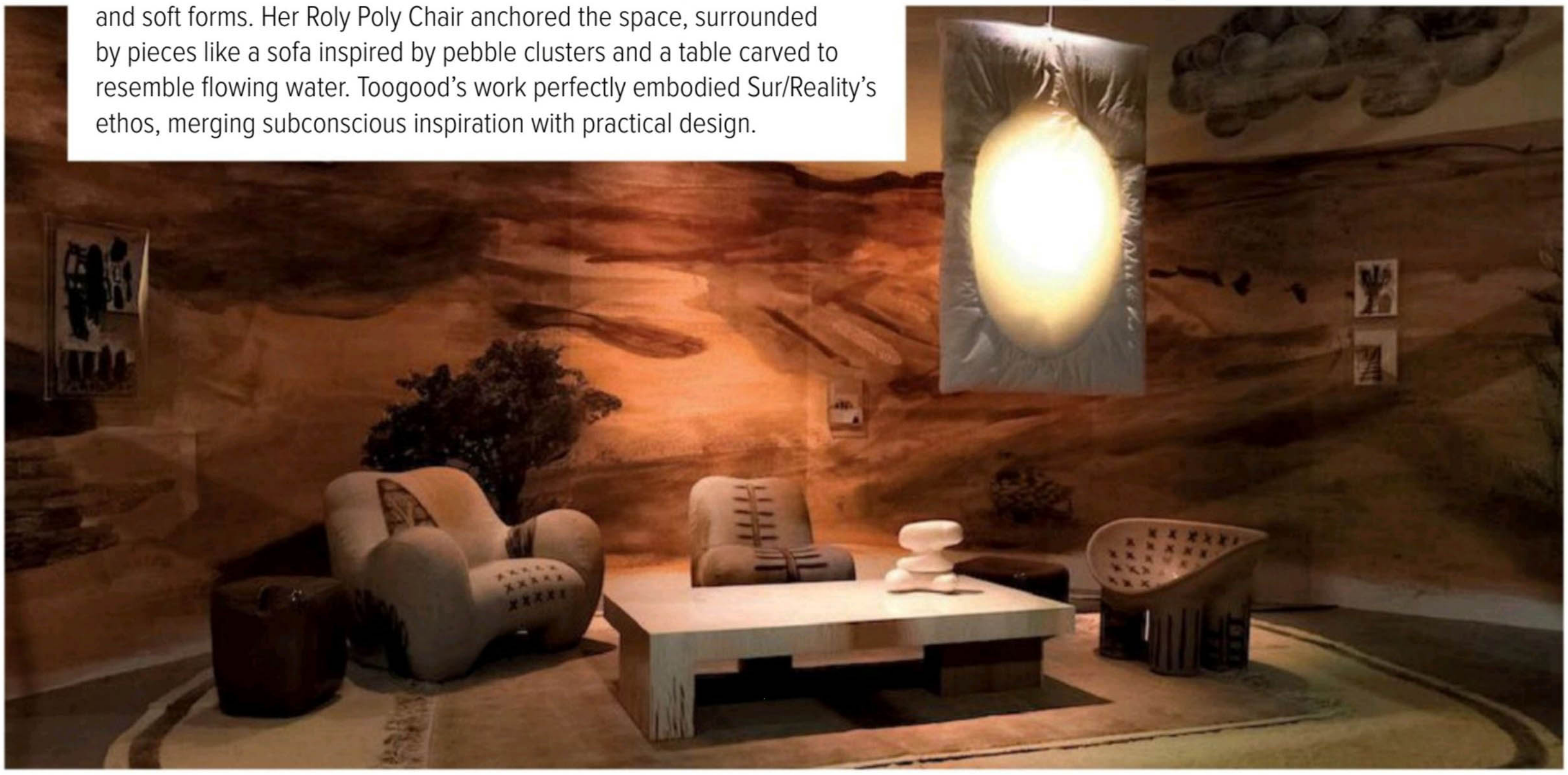
In Hospitality, curated by Julien Sebban, spaces came alive with lounges featuring breathing walls, bar counters that appeared to melt, and projections that transformed static interiors into dynamic, otherworldly experiences. Retail, under François Delclaux, explored surrealist storytelling through interactive displays, where touch-activated shelves and dreamlike shopfronts blurred the boundaries between reality and augmented imagination.

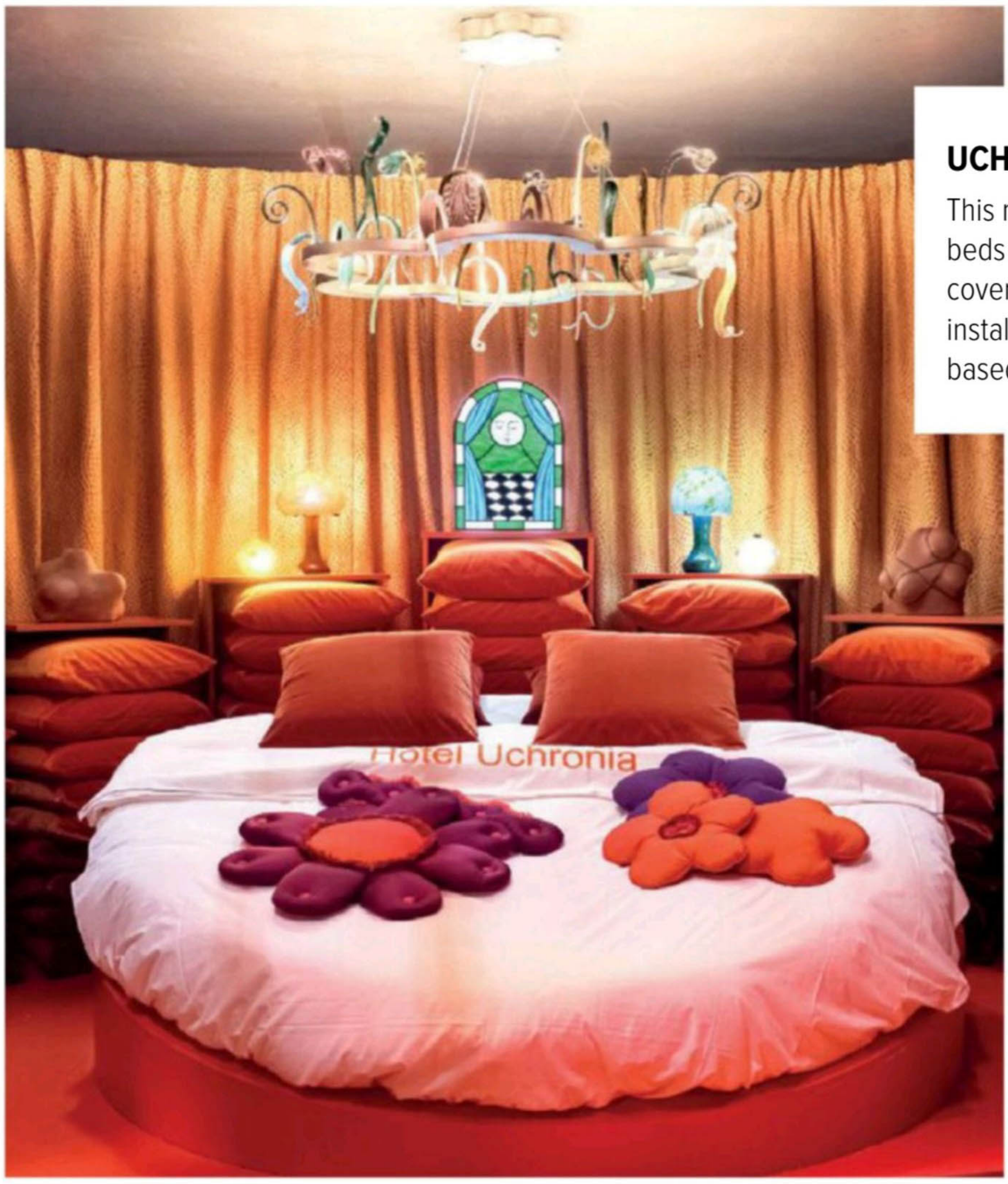
Meanwhile, Decor, curated by Elizabeth Leriche, elevated everyday objects into surreal masterpieces, with highlights such as a wall-mounted clock dripping like liquid mercury and candleholders that seemed to defy the laws of gravity. Together, these sections exemplified how surrealist principles continue to challenge and redefine the way we experience design.

STANDOUT PROJECTS FROM MAISON ET OBJET 2025

FAYE TOOGOOD'S 'WOMANIFESTO!'

The 2025 Designer of the Year crafted a dreamscape of subdued hues and soft forms. Her Roly Poly Chair anchored the space, surrounded by pieces like a sofa inspired by pebble clusters and a table carved to resemble flowing water. Toogood's work perfectly embodied Sur/Reality's ethos, merging subconscious inspiration with practical design.





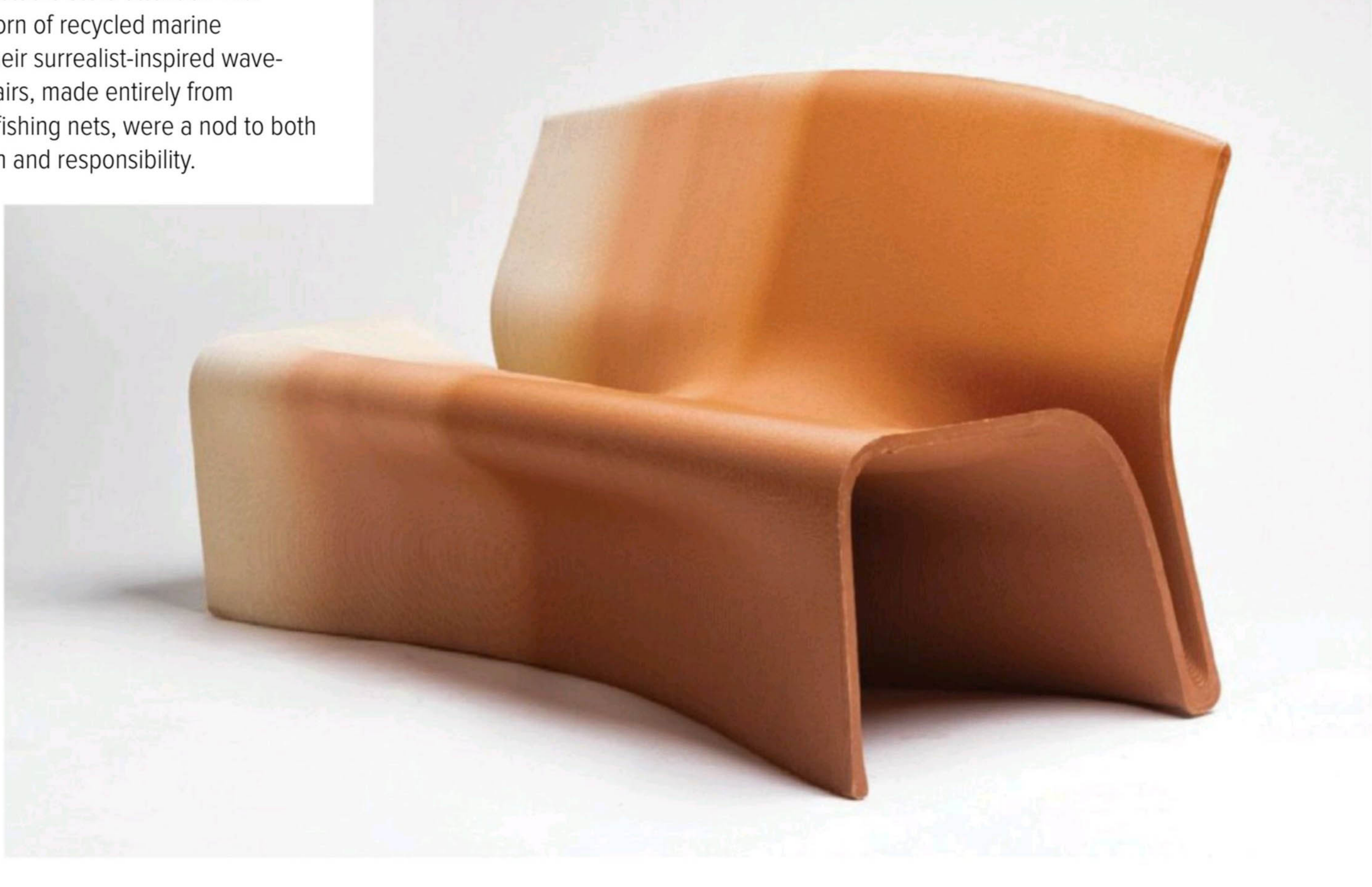
UCHRONIA'S 'HOTEL OF DREAMS'

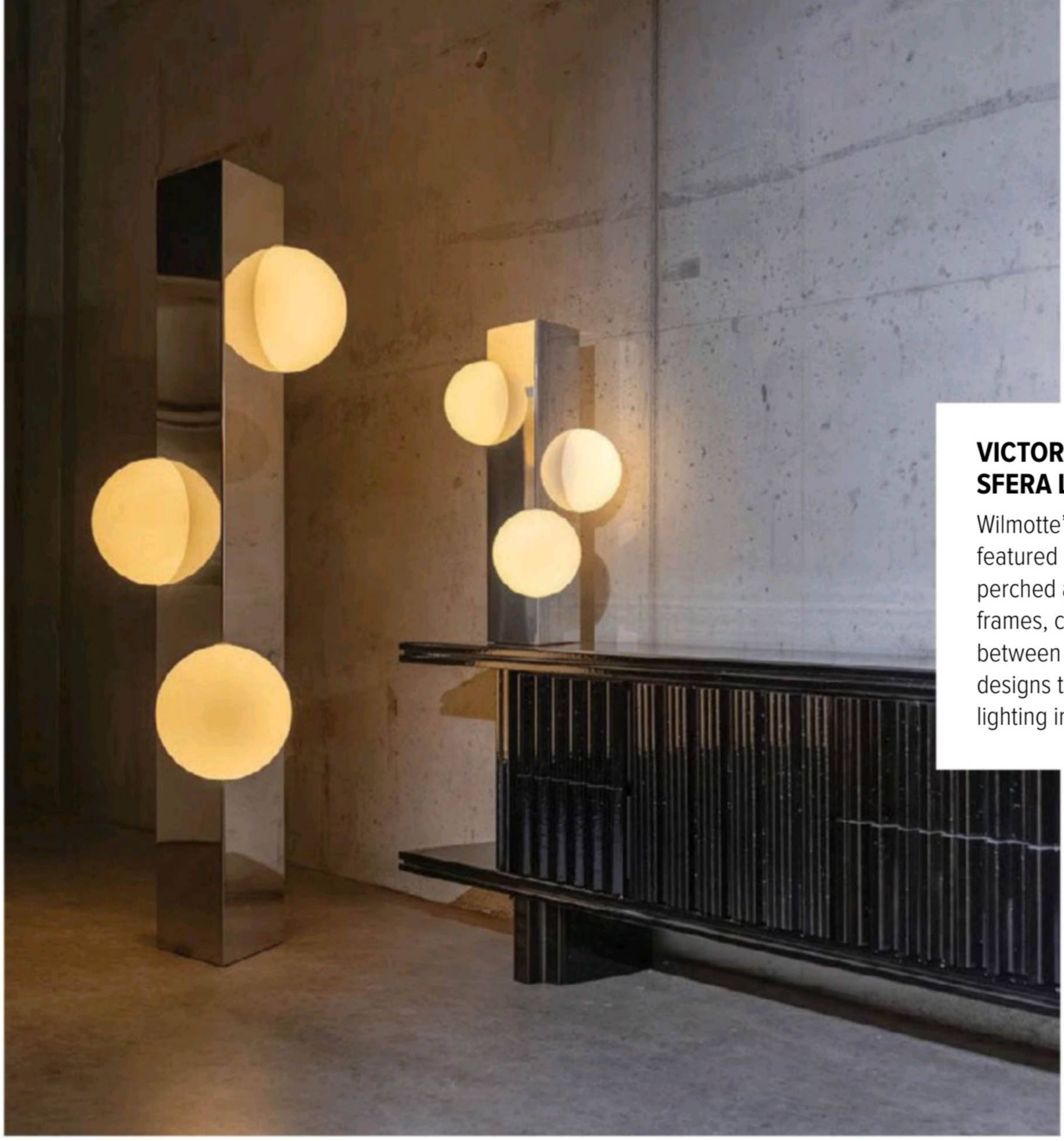
This maximalist wonderland included velvet-draped beds beneath glass-blown floral chandeliers, walls covered in iridescent metallic mosaics, and sensory installations where fragrances and visuals shifted based on visitors' movements.

> Everything tends to make us believe that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imagined, the past and the future… cease to be perceived as contradictions."
>
> —**ANDRÉ BRETON**

BLUECYCLE'S MARINE INNOVATION

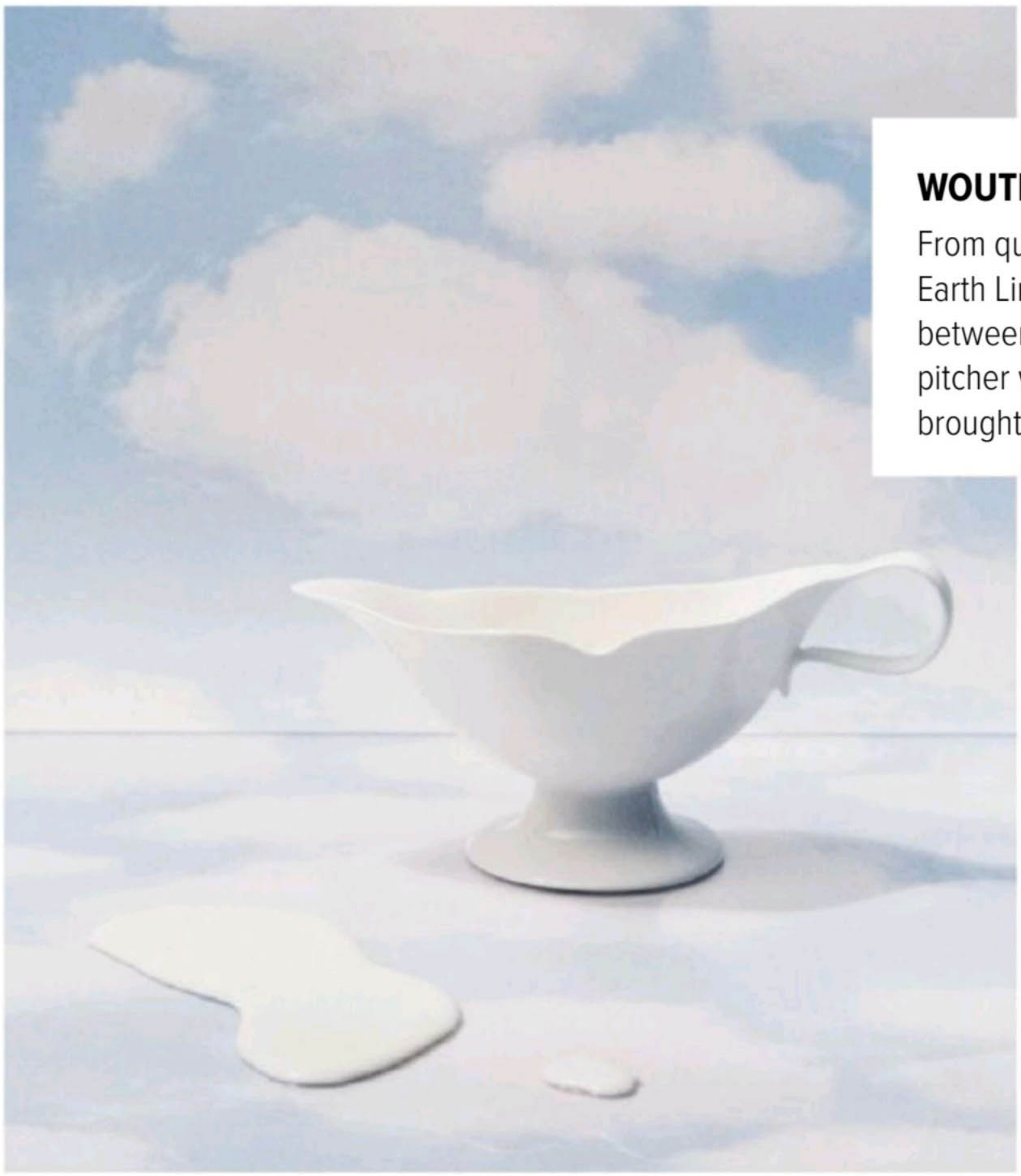
The Greek studio stole attention with furniture born of recycled marine plastics. Their surrealist-inspired wave-like armchairs, made entirely from discarded fishing nets, were a nod to both imagination and responsibility.





VICTORIA WILMOTTE'S SFERA LIGHTING

Wilmotte's lighting collection featured smoky glass globes perched atop angular steel frames, creating a cosmic interplay between light and shadow. These designs transformed functional lighting into visual poetry.



WOUTERS & HENDRIX X SERAX

From quirky owl vases in collaboration with Marni to Earth Line's organic silhouettes, Serax blurred the line between tableware and art. Pieces like a surrealist pitcher with a handle shaped like a crescent moon brought whimsy to the everyday.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

As we left the fair, André Breton's words echoed in our mind: "The marvelous is always beautiful, anything marvelous is beautiful, in fact only the marvelous is beautiful." Maison et Objet 2025 didn't just showcase design; it reminded us of its power to inspire, to challenge, and to transcend. Surrealism, as Breton envisioned, is not a movement confined to the past but a living force, and Maison et Objet proved it can shape the future. ✚

COVER FEATURE

Breaking Barriers; Democratising Design

In a profession where individuality often takes centre stage, Shimul Javeri Kadri stands out for her bold approach to collaboration. Alongside partners Vaishali Mangalvedhekar, Sarika Shetty and Roshni Kshirsagar, Kadri's eponymous firm has redefined the boundaries of architectural practice in India.

INTERVIEW: **SEEMA SREEDHARAN** PORTRAITS: **MEETESH TANEJA**

The Dasavatara Hotel, Tirupati: Located in the serene suburbs of Tirupati in the foothills of the Saptagiri range, the Dasavatara Hotel is one of the very few projects in the country that strikingly takes after the Hindu Temple design in organisation and experience.
Photo Credit: Rajesh Vora

As we navigate the complexities of our built environment, it's clear that architecture is more than just a profession—it's a powerful tool for shaping the world around us. For Shimul Javeri Kadri and her partners Vaishali Mangalvedhekar, Sarika Shetty and Roshni Kshirsagar, this is more than just a notion—it's a guiding philosophy that has driven their practice for over three decades. Eschewing the predictable route, Shimul took a courageous leap, establishing her independent architectural practice in 1990 and cementing her reputation as a pioneering female architect. SJK Architects has undergone a remarkable transformation since its inception as a solo practice. Over the years, the firm has grown in stature and size, evolving into a dynamic partnership with three like-minded architects who share Shimul's passion for architecture that makes an impact.

Meeting Shimul and her partners in person was an absolute delight! The quartet's vibrant personalities shone through, each one as captivating as their designs. Shimul exuded a fascinating presence, her warm smile tempered by an assertive demeanour that commanded attention. Her confidence was daunting, yet inspiring. Alongside her, Sarika's calm and composed nature provided a soothing counterbalance, while Vaishali's gentle yet observant approach added a layer of depth and nuance. Completing the quartet, Roshni's keen eye for style and aesthetics infused the group with a sense of vibrant creativity, together forming a dynamic and formidable team. The afternoon was truly electrifying, as we found ourselves surrounded by visionary women, immersed in a palpable collective creative energy. It was fabulous to witness the synergy and camaraderie that fuels SJK Architects' innovative approach.

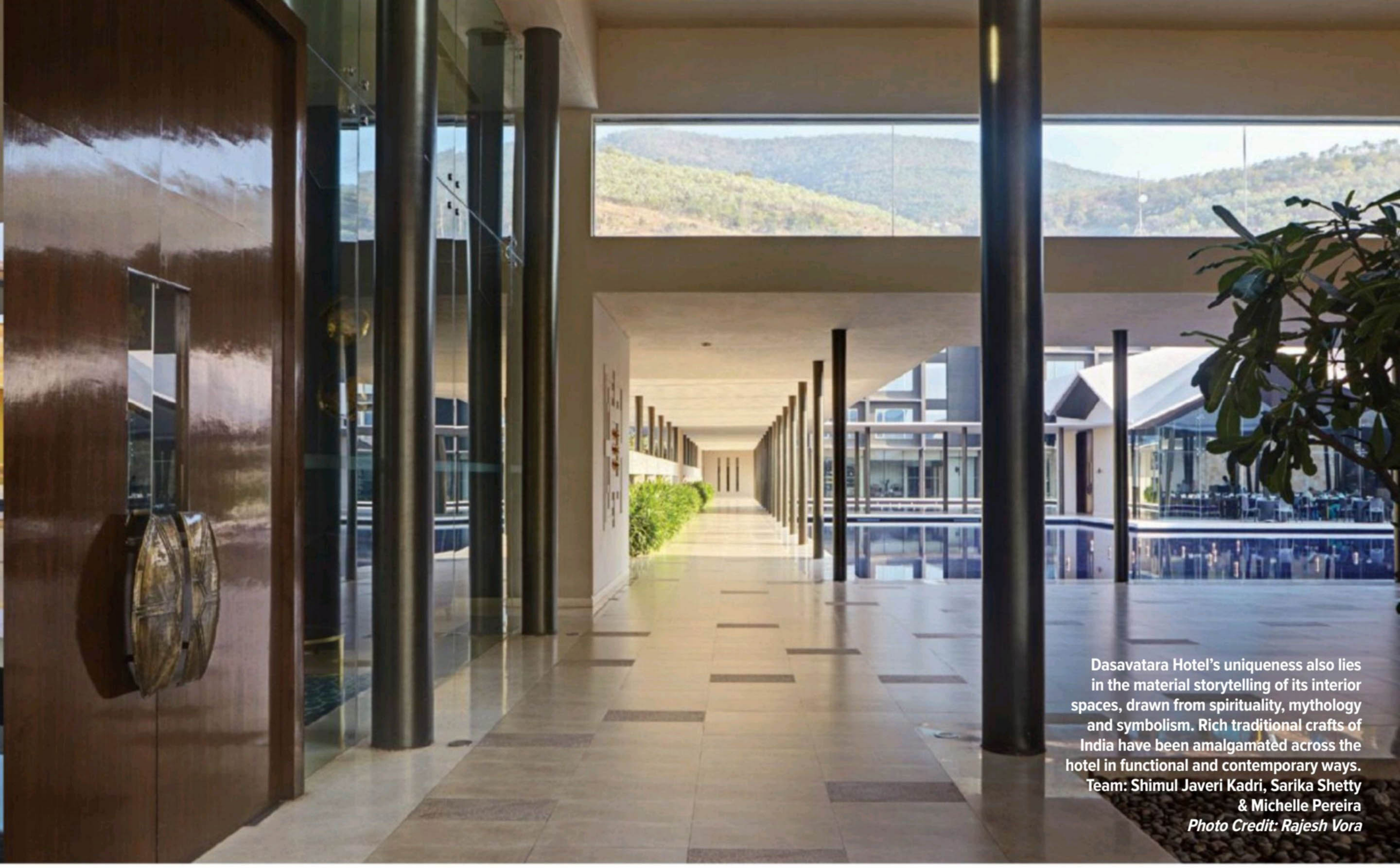
We met at the SJK Architects' office in Colaba, a space that serves as a vibrant showcase for the firm's impressive portfolio and storied legacy, with every corner reflecting the team's passion for innovative and exceptional design. The office walls are lined with meticulously crafted models of their most iconic projects, alongside shelves bursting with architecture books, sketches and eclectic art pieces, offering a glimpse into the firm's rich design heritage. Even as we prepared for our conversation, the office hummed with creative energy, with various teams clustered together, intensely focused on bringing multiple projects to life.

As we delved into a conversation, we explored the firm's evolution from a solo practice to a collaborative partnership and gained insight into their steadfast commitment to crafting architecture that is not only aesthetically striking but also thoughtful, meaningful and socially responsible. What resonated deeply was their acute awareness of the architect's role as a steward of the built environment and its social implications.

Here's an excerpt...

Shimul, let's start with a pivotal moment in SJK's journey. Three years ago, the firm marked a significant turning point by evolving from a solo practice to a partnership. This strategic shift undoubtedly had a profound impact on the firm's trajectory. Can you share with us the thought process and key drivers that led to this deliberate transition?

Shimul Javeri Kadri (SJK): It's a lonely route as a solo practitioner. My decision to transition to a partnership was motivated by two primary factors. Firstly, it presented an opportunity to validate my long-held conviction that collaboration and democratic principles can



Dasavatara Hotel's uniqueness also lies in the material storytelling of its interior spaces, drawn from spirituality, mythology and symbolism. Rich traditional crafts of India have been amalgamated across the hotel in functional and contemporary ways. Team: Shimul Javeri Kadri, Sarika Shetty & Michelle Pereira
Photo Credit: Rajesh Vora

be powerful catalysts for creativity. This theoretical framework, which I had nurtured for some time, could now be tested and implemented in a real-world setting. I strongly believe in the power of the collective.

I have witnessed Sarika, Vaishali and Roshni's journey at SJK, and they embodied the qualities I valued: wisdom, emotional maturity and a shared vision. In each of their projects, they demonstrated a level of personal and professional growth that aligned with my own aspirations for the practice.

When you show trust in people and propel them to leadership roles, there's a profound acceleration in their growth. With a clear vision guiding them, they've seized the reins with confidence, leveraging their unique strengths to propel our design excellence and thought leadership forward. Ultimately, the greatest challenges we face are those within. It's been a privilege to observe my team cultivate the emotional maturity to navigate these complexities, emerging stronger, wiser and more resilient.

Interesting. The last three years have been crucial. As compared to your formative years, would you say that the past three years have been more defining and more impactful?

SJK: I believe that any beginning has a profound impact. Reflecting on the early days of my practice, 30-34 years ago, I'm reminded of the immense significance of those formative years. My first project left an indelible mark. I vividly recall the sense of trepidation I felt with each site visit. It was exhilarating and terrifying all at once.

Literally, for me, this practice grew from a tiny 4x10ft room. For many years, my practice operated from a single bedroom in my home. Yet, despite the modest beginnings, I remained clear about what I didn't want to do, and this clarity allowed me to focus on what truly mattered. By knowing what to avoid, I was able to cultivate my own unique approach and ultimately, forge a path that has led me to where I am today. In that sense, the first few years were more organic.

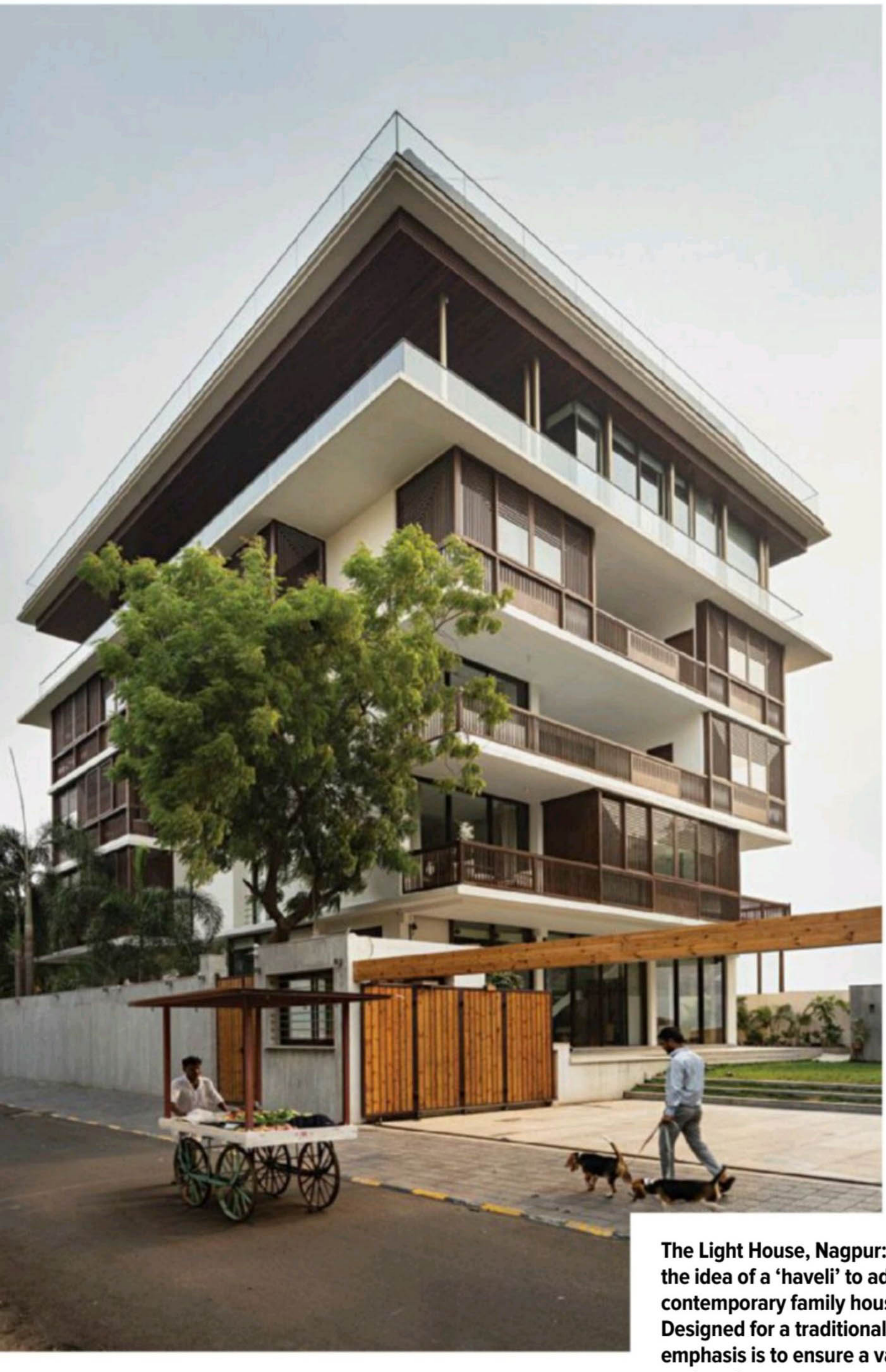
But what makes the past three years truly pivotal? In my view, this period has been instrumental in establishing systems for the future of the practice. We've been diligently developing standards, crafting templates and systematically institutionalising our practice—effectively laying the groundwork for sustainable growth and success.

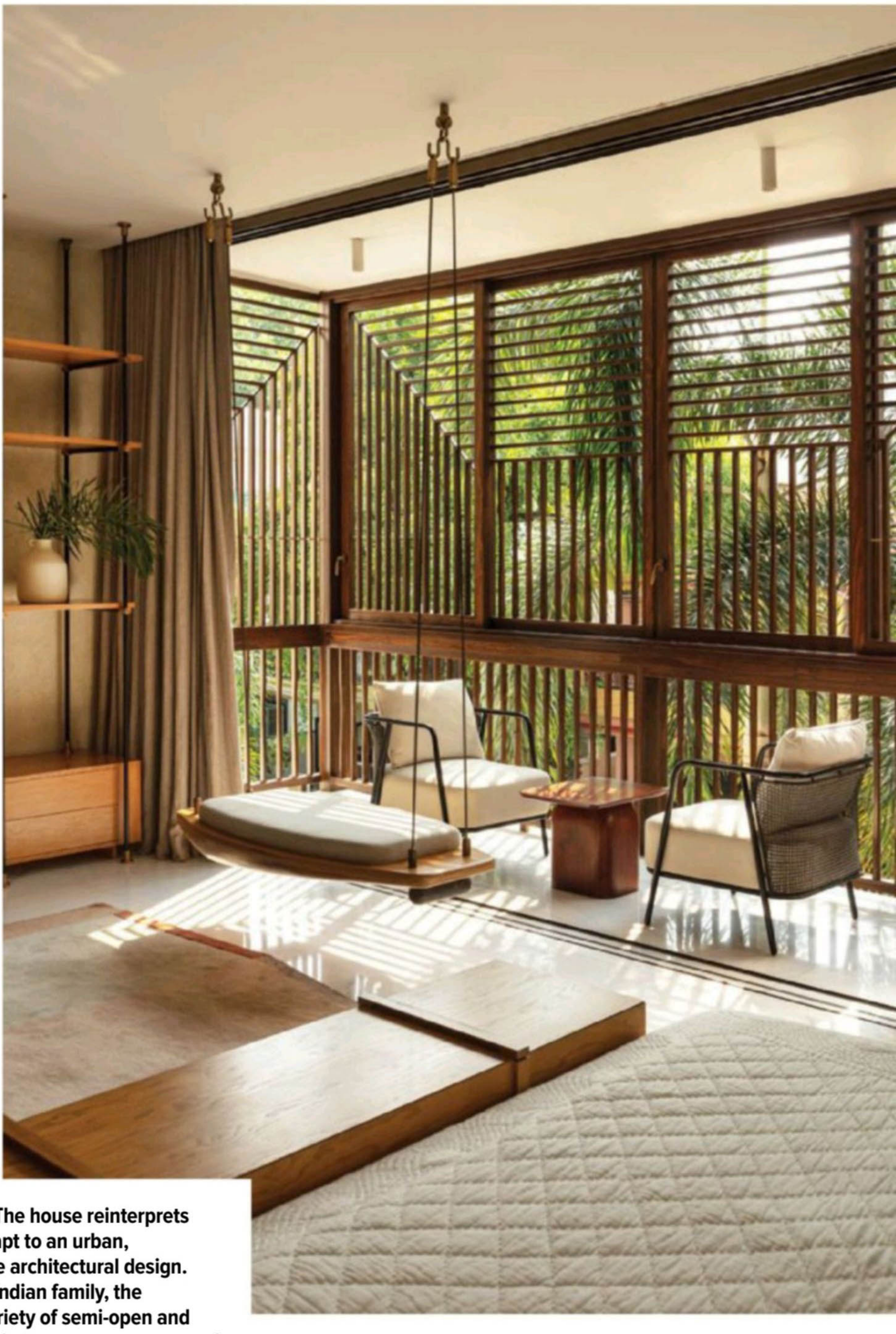
While our earlier years were marked by intense theoretical exploration and project execution, the past three years have been dedicated to deliberate consolidation. We've been methodically creating systems, streamlining processes and taking a step back to assess our accomplishments and the impact we've had. This reflective period has also prompted us to ask fundamental questions: What kind of impact do we aspire to make? And how will we strategically achieve it?

As we transitioned into a partnership, our core premise was that design should be democratic. We envisioned a platform where every voice is not only heard but also seen. It takes a diverse group of talented individuals to bring a building to life.

This collaborative spirit is often overlooked in the architecture world, where only a select few receive recognition. We believe that our field is, in fact, a collective endeavor much like filmmaking. While the lead actors may take centre stage, it's the entire crew that brings the production to life.

As we look to the future, our goal is to create an inclusive and nurturing environment that empowers talented individuals to take the reins. We're committed to fostering a culture that celebrates diversity, creativity and collaboration, ensuring that our practice remains a vibrant and dynamic force in the years to come.





The Light House, Nagpur: The house reinterprets the idea of a 'haveli' to adapt to an urban, contemporary family house architectural design. Designed for a traditional Indian family, the emphasis is to ensure a variety of semi-open and enclosed common spaces that encourage a sense of togetherness and community, spaces that can help hold a large family together.
Team: Shimul Javeri Kadri, Vaishali Mangalvedhekar, Roshni Kshirsagar, Nikita Shahdadpuri, Vaishali Panchal, Payal Jain, Palak Jain
Photo Credit: Niveditaa Gupta

> *"As we transitioned into a partnership, our core premise was that design should be democratic. We envisioned a platform where every voice is not only heard but also seen. It takes a diverse group of talented individuals to bring a building to life."*
>
> —**SHIMUL JAVERI KADRI,** *Founder & Partner, SJK Architects*

At the heart of the residence lies the central atrium, drawing inspiration from the traditional courtyards of Maharashtrian wadas. This thoughtful design element seamlessly integrates natural ventilation, effortless navigation, and visual harmony across multiple levels and internal spaces.

Photo Credit: Niveditaa Gupta

> “
> *Our partnership is built on the wisdom of 35 years of experience, combined with our individual perspectives and expertise. We continue to learn from each other, and we hope to share that knowledge with others. Ultimately, it's about making a difference, and that's what drives us.”*
>
> —**ROSHNI KSHIRSAGAR,** *Partner, SJK Architects*

That’s interesting. The firm now functions as a collective of like-minded individuals. Sarika, Vaishali and Roshni, it would be interesting to know each of your initiation into SJK and your individual career trajectories.

Sarika Shetty (SS): All three of us have witnessed the entire trajectory. My own journey, however, has been uniquely intertwined with the firm's growth. As an intern, I joined SJK without any prior work experience, and I've never worked elsewhere since. I recall interviewing with Shimul and persistently following up with the receptionist until she finally offered me the internship. At the time, I had no clear plans or expectations. When Shimul asked me about my five-year goals, I boldly declared that I would have my own firm by then.

However, as I immersed myself in SJK's culture, I discovered an environment that fostered growth, valued individual contributions and encouraged innovative thinking. This transformative experience shifted my trajectory, and I've never looked back.

One month down the line as an intern. I got an opportunity with the clients of the Ayushakti Ayurvedic Health Centre, who came to Shimul to build their own home in Mumbai. This is in a place called Royal Palms, which is very close to where the national park is, and it is a part of, where the national park extends. For some reason, Shimul was not around, and she showed confidence in me to go and do the first brief taking for this project with the clients. I think I very successfully took their brief taking exercise to imbibe what the client wants and to not be in the city of Mumbai and be in the midst of nature, and that is what their dream was.

My first project was a significant institutional undertaking. I worked closely with Vaishali on this project. Today we are in the 22nd year of development of that very campus, which is now a thriving university. I vividly recall starting with a modest building on that campus and witnessing its incremental growth and evolution over time. This project has been an interesting experience, as I've had the privilege of revisiting and contributing to its expansion. Within just three weeks of joining SJK, I accompanied Vaishali to the site in Warangal, gaining invaluable hands-on experience. I believe the opportunities presented to me early on were instrumental in shaping my professional trajectory.

The stability and responsibility that came with working at SJK fostered an environment where individuals could thrive. I think it was a two-way street. The firm provided us with opportunities at the right time, and we, in turn, brought a strong desire to learn and absorb as much as we could. As a team, we were driven by an insatiable curiosity and desire to learn, which served us well during that era and continues to inspire us.

Vaishali Mangalvedhekar (VM): My journey at SJK Architects began when I stumbled upon an article featuring the Synergy Lifestyles Office in a magazine. What caught my attention was the stunning staircase detail, with cables supporting cantilevered steps and crisp, meticulous detailing. At the time, I had just completed a research course at IIT focused on climatically driven architecture and simulation studies.

One of my early projects at SJK was designing a factory for Synergy Lifestyles in Karur, Tamil Nadu. Shimul handed me a tracing sheet with a north light truss design, aiming to bring daylight into the factory's core. Drawing from my IIT learnings, I intuitively felt that the concept deserved further exploration. I proposed an alternative solution—a monitor roof. Shimul reviewed my idea, grasped the intent, and elegantly transformed the structure with a sweeping, curved roofline, prioritising a humane and gentle experience for the end-users. Even as a young architect, I was given the opportunity to express my thoughts and learnings, and bring them to the table.

Roshni Kshirsagar (RK): Before joining SJK, I had a brief stint with another firm, lasting only three months. I was interviewed by Sarika and Shimul in back-to-back sessions, and they offered me an offer almost immediately. I asked for a couple of days to think, and Sarika jokingly suggested I start the day after tomorrow.

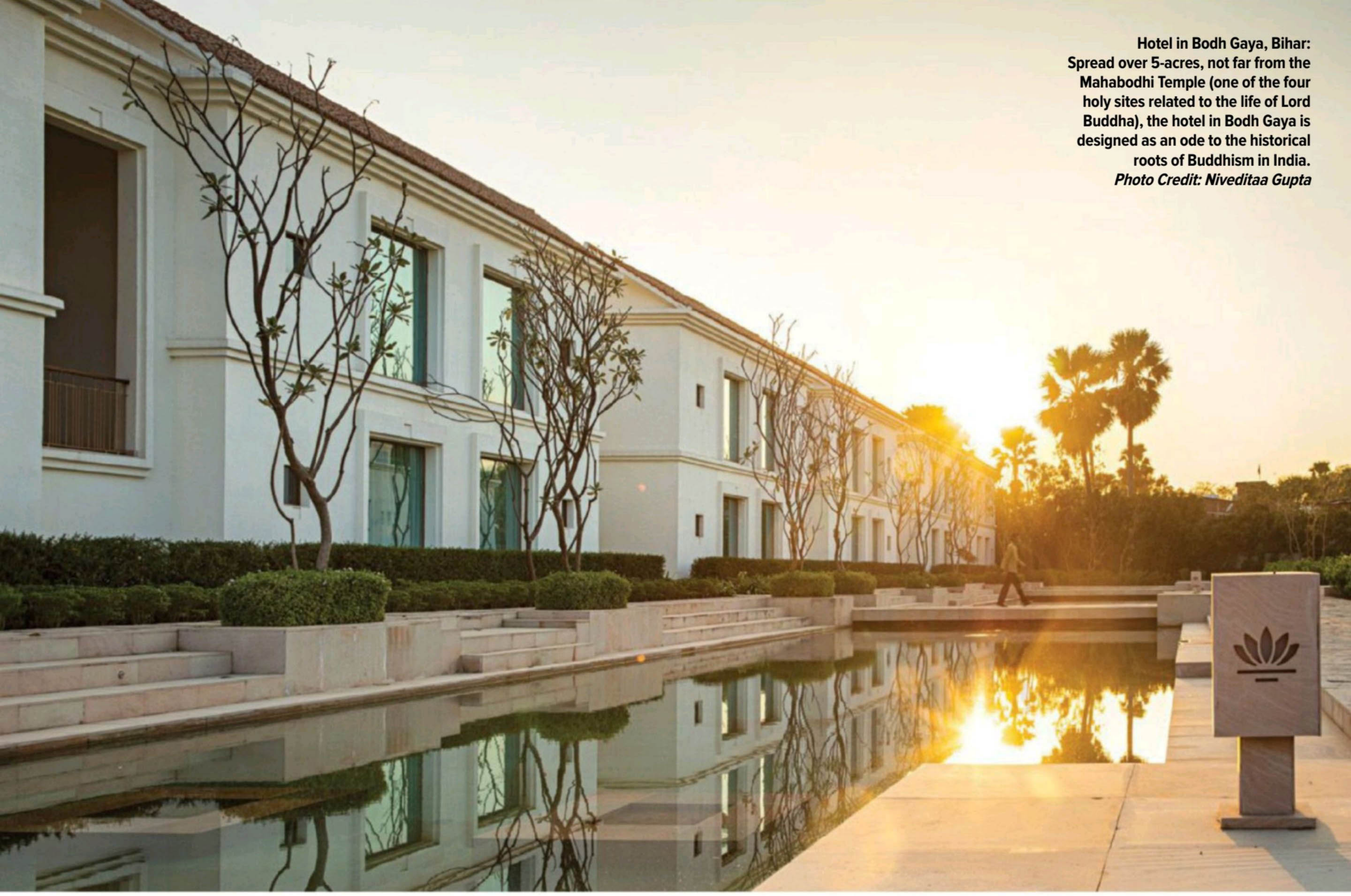
At the time, I was 23 or 24, fresh out of college with only a couple of short-term jobs under my belt. I believe the reason I clicked with Sarika, Vaishali and Shimul was that we shared similar values and personalities. This bond helped us work seamlessly together.

Initially, I worked closely with Sarika and Vaishali on various projects. They were handling projects independently, and I learned a great deal from them. The SJK style of throwing people into new challenges helped me grow, and I soon found myself leading a massive home store project, including brand identity design. When the two senior team members working with me got married and left the project, I was left to navigate it on my own. This experience taught me invaluable lessons, not just technically but also in building relationships with clients and collaborators.

Sometimes, I think about how certain decisions can alter the course of one's life. My interview at SJK, for instance, was a chance encounter. I had travelled to Ahmedabad with friends for an event called 12 on 12 at CEPT, where I met Sarika and the team. One of my friends had an extra ticket, and that's how I ended up meeting the people who would change my professional life.

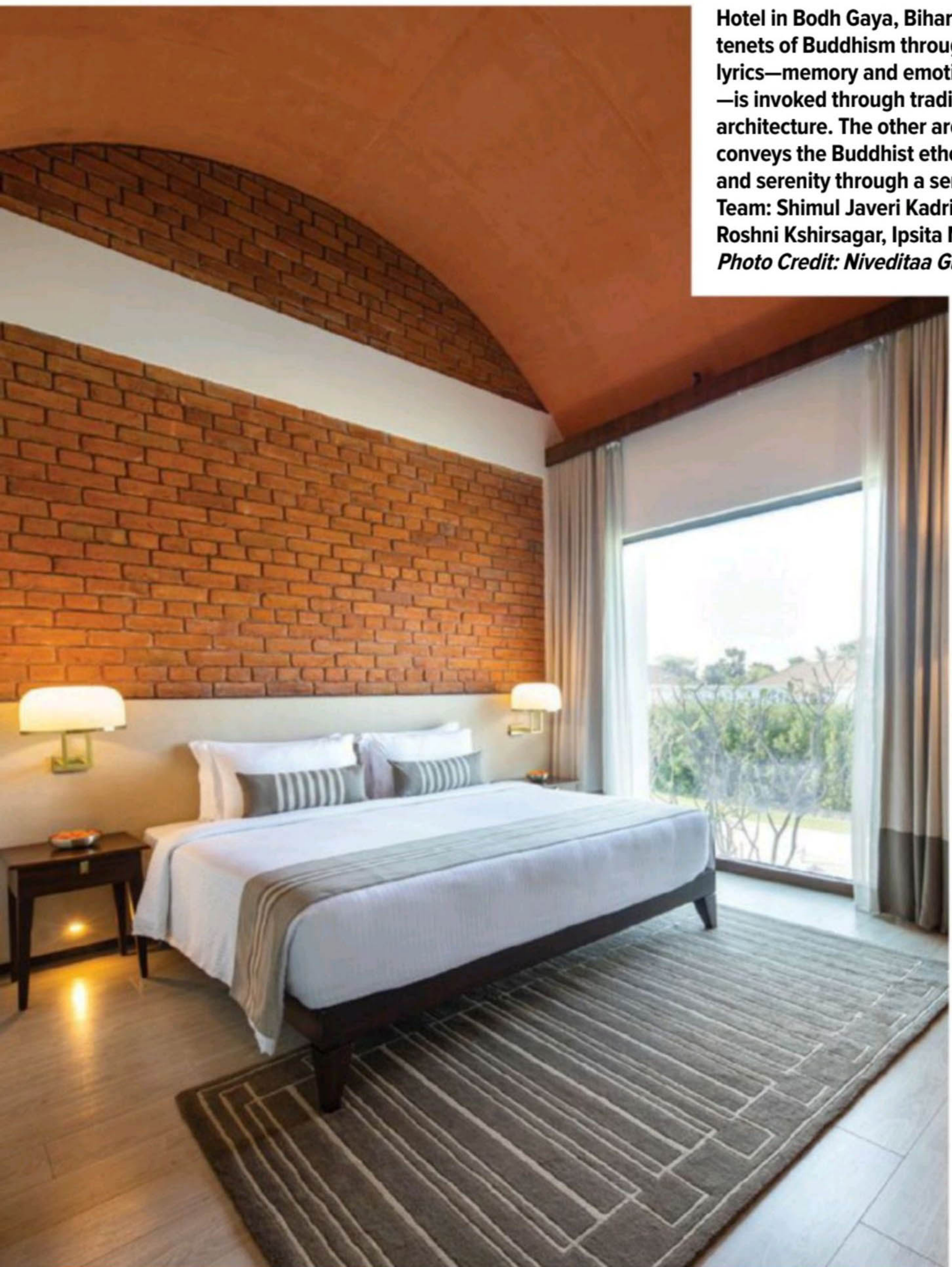
Shimul, listening to all three of your partners, I understand one aspect about you, that you place immense trust in your team, and it is your confidence in them that eventually led them to this path. What is it that each one of them brings to the table?

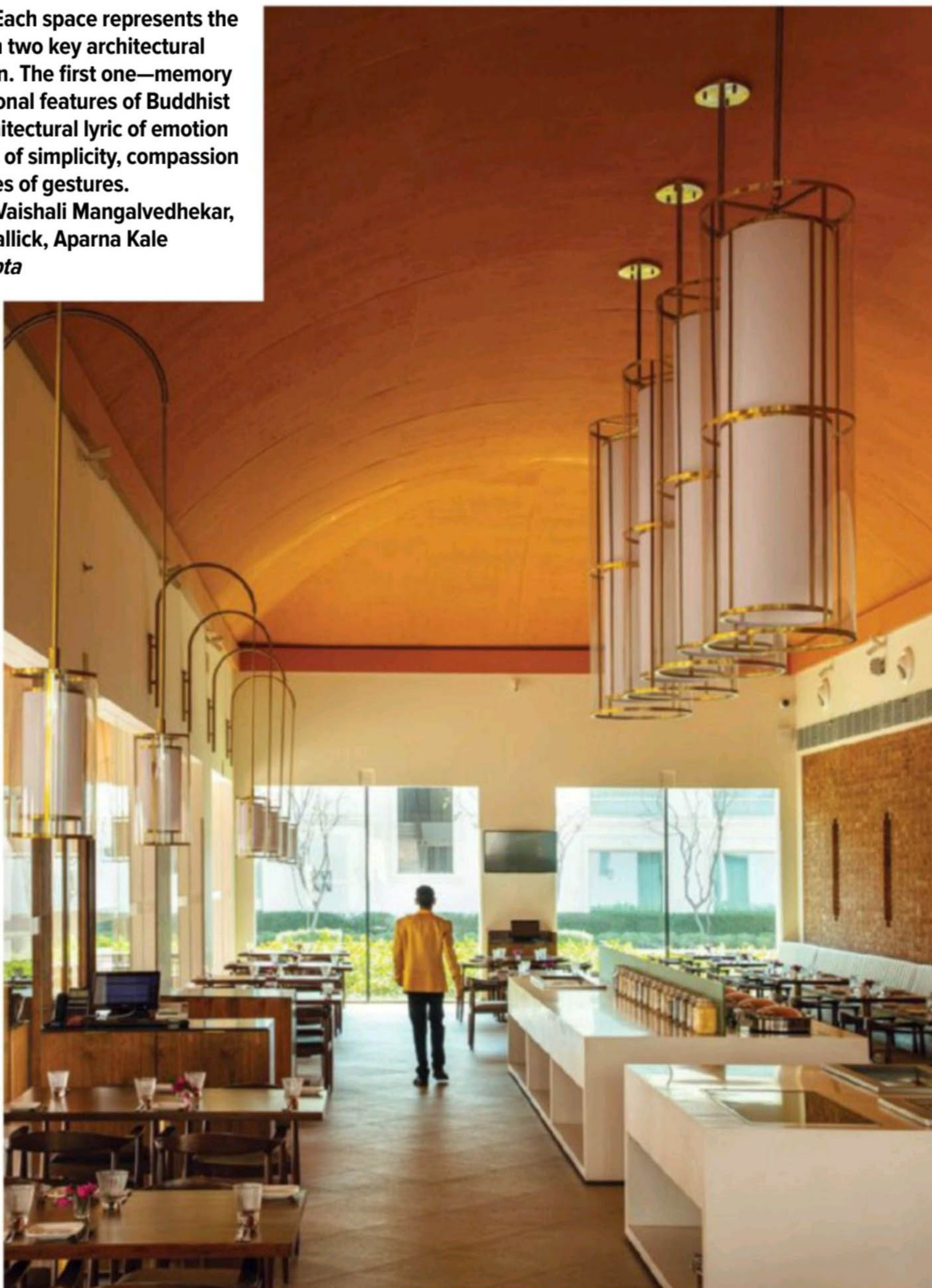
SJK: I vividly recall reviewing Vaishali's resume and thinking, 'Wow, I hope I can hire her!' While the details of the interview itself are a bit fuzzy, my initial impression of her credentials has remained etched in my memory.



Hotel in Bodh Gaya, Bihar: Spread over 5-acres, not far from the Mahabodhi Temple (one of the four holy sites related to the life of Lord Buddha), the hotel in Bodh Gaya is designed as an ode to the historical roots of Buddhism in India.
Photo Credit: Niveditaa Gupta

Hotel in Bodh Gaya, Bihar: Each space represents the tenets of Buddhism through two key architectural lyrics—memory and emotion. The first one—memory—is invoked through traditional features of Buddhist architecture. The other architectural lyric of emotion conveys the Buddhist ethos of simplicity, compassion and serenity through a series of gestures.
Team: Shimul Javeri Kadri, Vaishali Mangalvedhekar, Roshni Kshirsagar, Ipsita Mallick, Aparna Kale
Photo Credit: Niveditaa Gupta





And Sarika, she stood out for her exceptional brightness. What struck me most was her remarkable ability to single-handedly manage an entire project as an intern—a feat that, to this day, remains unparalleled by any intern in the history of SJK.

Sarika injects a fantastic energy into our team, bringing a keen perception of the environmental landscape and a finger on the pulse of the world around us. Vaishali, on the other hand, brings a wealth of wisdom and a gentle, compassionate approach to the table. She is approachable and trusted, someone that everyone naturally turns to for guidance and support.

Roshni was one of the few interior designers to join our firm, and she brought in an interesting perspective and a softer approach to design. All three of us were architects, so, our focus was more on the form, on creating great architecture. There was a prevailing mindset among architects that interior design was secondary to architecture. For a Mumbai-based practice like ours, this was a common trajectory for growth. However, having Roshni on board, with her distinct perspective as an interior designer, was invaluable. I believe that in the last three years, she has truly elevated the importance of interior design within our practice. Her expertise has not only complemented our architectural work but has also established interior design as a robust and essential discipline.

SJK has a remarkable portfolio of work, ranging from residences to institutes, resorts and commercial spaces. Could you take us through some of your breakthrough projects? We'd love to hear about some of the projects that have pushed the boundaries of architecture and design. And some more, where each of you have found it challenging or memorable.

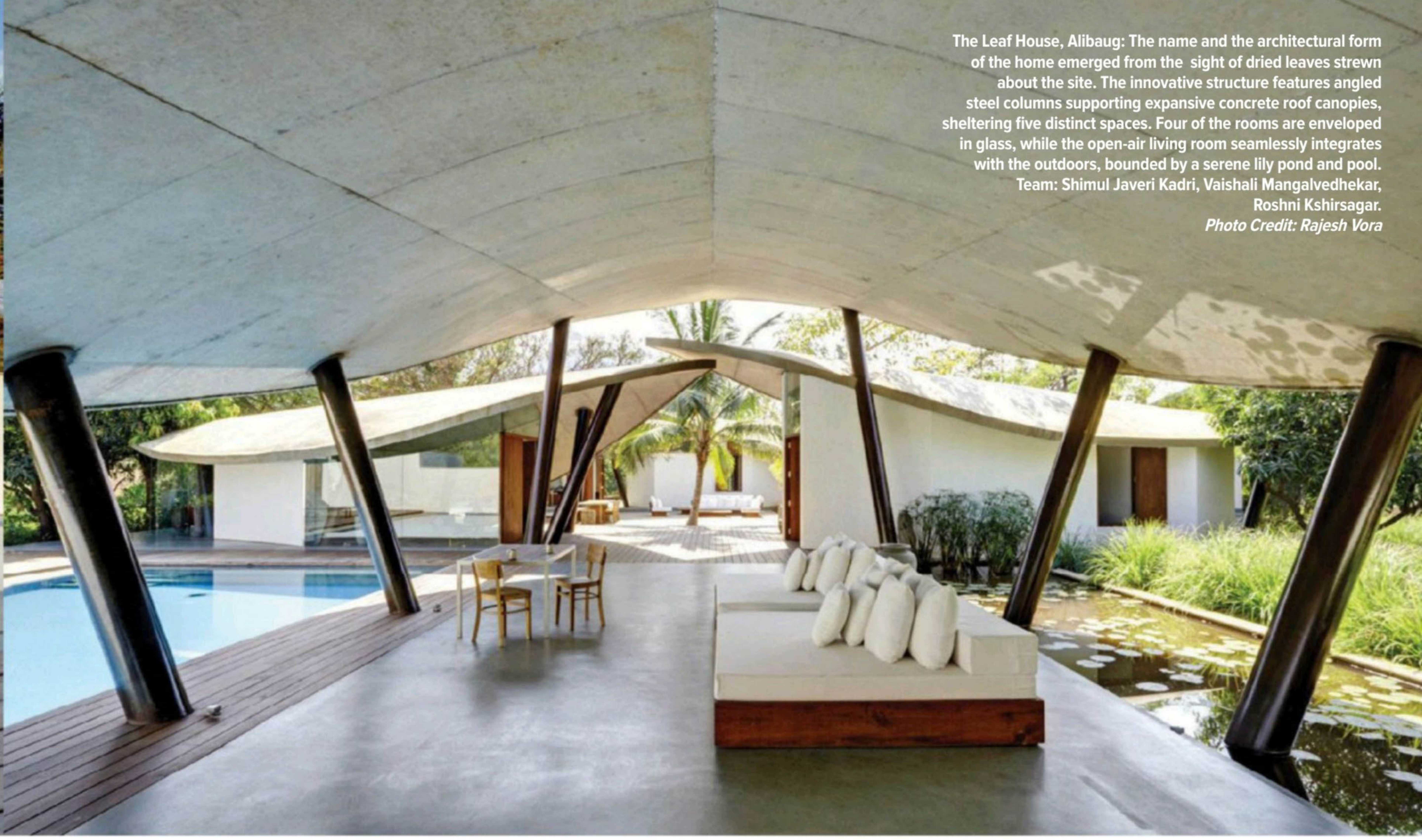
SJK: Each and every project has been challenging. One of our notable projects was the Mahindra Automobile Design Studio in Mumbai, a classic example of adaptive reuse. The design brief was to create a neutral but 'designed' space for automobile stylists. What made it even more interesting was that we had to transform a series of industrial sheds into a state-of-the-art styling studio for the automotive industry. Our task was to retain the original footprint and steel portals while creating a cutting-edge facility that would house offices, architectural functions, workshops, display areas and recreational spaces.

The challenge was to work with the existing structure, which lacked documentation and posed significant load-bearing challenges. Our approach to revitalising the site involved strategic adaptive reuse, breathing new life into existing industrial structures. We carefully assessed the infrastructure, deciding what to retain and what to discard. The smallest shed was completely dismantled, while the larger sheds' structural skeletons were preserved.

The roofs and walls were stripped away, exposing a fragile network of steel portals and purlins. Rather than replacing them, we chose to retain and strengthen this imperfect structural system. The unique, irregular rhythm of the portal frames became an integral consideration in our design intervention, influencing the office architecture that would eventually occupy the space.

SS: The SR University in Warangal, which was also my first project has been with our firm for 22 years. Over the years, we've incrementally, expanded the campus, and our current work marks a significant departure from our previous efforts. While we once focused on traditional academic blocks, our present approach is centred around creating immersive, experiential spaces that redefine the way students learn, live and interact on campus. This shift towards experiential design is poised to revolutionise the campus experience.

Over the past 20 years, I've witnessed an entire generation of



The Leaf House, Alibaug: The name and the architectural form of the home emerged from the sight of dried leaves strewn about the site. The innovative structure features angled steel columns supporting expansive concrete roof canopies, sheltering five distinct spaces. Four of the rooms are enveloped in glass, while the open-air living room seamlessly integrates with the outdoors, bounded by a serene lily pond and pool. Team: Shimul Javeri Kadri, Vaishali Mangalvedhekar, Roshni Kshirsagar.
Photo Credit: Rajesh Vora

students pass through the campus. With a minimum of 12,000 students at any given time, the numbers are staggering. If you do the math, that's approximately 240,000 individuals who have been influenced by our design over the past two decades. It's a truly humbling thought.

Like Shimul mentioned, our firm has made a significant impact through various projects, especially in the past three years, primarily focusing on public-facing initiatives rather than private residences. We've deliberately chosen to prioritise projects that benefit the broader community, such as hospitality, cultural institutions, education, retail and office spaces. These projects have a profound influence on people's lives, particularly in the realms of education and institutional design. The way we design these spaces can shape the human experience, impacting how people think, learn, and interact. For instance, in education, the physical environment can reinforce a school's pedagogy, influencing not only students but also their families.

> “
> *I'd like to share a personal aspiration for SJK Architects, inspired by an essay called 'Mushrooms as Mentors' by Carla Goldstein. This essay explores how patriarchy emphasizes dominance and control, whereas nature offers alternative models for leadership.”*
>
> —**VAISHALI MANGALVEDHEKAR**
> *Partner, SJK Architects*

VM: For me, it would have to be the hotel project in Bodh Gaya. The project offered us an opportunity to craft an immersive architectural experience that embodies the essence of Buddhist philosophy. We drew inspiration from traditional Buddhist architecture, incorporating timeless features like vaults, corbelled arches and stepped jambs to evoke a sense of memory and connection.

But we also wanted to convey the emotional resonance of Buddhism—its emphasis on simplicity, compassion and serenity. We employed a range of subtle gestures, from the thoughtful use of materials to the layered, contemplative spaces. Throughout the hotel, you'll find nods to Buddhist symbology and philosophy, from the artwork to the signage, which also helps guide visitors through the space.

Of course, Bodh Gaya's climate can be unforgiving, so we prioritised passive design strategies to mitigate the heat. We partnered with local families to handcraft 80,000 clay tiles, which not only insulate the vaulted ceilings but also support the local community.

SS: For us, it is all about honouring our roots to remain in touch with our distinctive sensibilities. And that's why we lean towards cultural architecture. Our interest in cultural architecture pushes us to look at culture as a repository of a society's sense of beauty and its learned technologies. Our work is inspired by historical wisdom, vernacular materials and techniques—curating and contemporising them to enhance lives today. Take for instance, the Museum for Jain Heritage in Koba. The architectural design of the museum seeks to translate religious values into built form, going beyond the literal. For the design, we questioned the conventional notion of a museum as a 'black box' and looked at it through the lenses of context, climate and community.

RK: All projects are challenging. But if I were to pick one, it would have to be the Forest of Chintz (an Indian luxury label that makes statement accessories and haute couture). As with all our projects, even for this retail project, I turned towards our rich for inspiration. The continuous monolithic stepped display is reminiscent of the traditional stepwells of India. But before building these steps, we documented all of Forest of Chintz' collections, measured their sizes and created an inventory. We didn't create generic steps; the depth and dimension of each step was designed according to the accessories. The challenge was to encourage the customers to engage with the products.

What underlying philosophy or set of values unites the partnership and guides your collective decision-making?
SJK: For us, it's about crafting spaces that touch hearts and minds. We're guided by a set of core principles that inspire us to create architecture that's deeply connected to people, culture and the environment. We believe in tapping into the soul of a place, evoking emotions and memories through simplicity and purity. Our designs are infused with a deep understanding of local culture, history and context. Beauty, in all its forms, is at the heart of our work. We strive to create spaces that uplift and inspire, fostering a sense of community and connection. Sustainability is woven into every aspect of our design process. We collaborate with natural systems, harnessing sunlight, wind and local materials to create spaces that are both comfortable and sustainable. Ultimately, our goal is to create transformative spaces that exceed expectations and realize hidden aspirations.

Sustainability has become a ubiquitous term, but its significance is often lost in the noise. As the building industry is a leading contributor to environmental degradation, I'd love to delve deeper into your perspective on sustainability. Does your approach encompass not only environmental sustainability but also social and economic aspects, recognizing the intricate relationships between these dimensions?
SJK: For me, sustainability encompasses not just environmental considerations, but also social and cultural dimensions. We're meticulous about selecting materials that minimise our ecological footprint. Culturally, we strive to preserve and celebrate India's rich heritage, particularly in rural areas, through projects like museums and hotels. Our approach to cultural sustainability focuses on honouring the collective visual memory of communities, keeping traditions alive while embracing evolution, and allowing cultures to adapt and flourish.

RK: I'd like to share an exciting project we're currently working on—a hotel in Hampi. Vaishali is leading the architecture, while I'm focusing on the interiors. What's particularly thrilling is the opportunity to infuse the space with local craft and culture. Through extensive research, visits and collaborations with NGOs and craft clusters within a 50-km radius, we've identified exceptional artisans and skills. We're not only celebrating these traditional skills but also transforming them into functional, utilitarian products that add depth to the space. One of the most rewarding aspects is the impact on the local economy. We're working with a textile designer from the Ilkal Saari region of North Karnataka, known for its impoverished farming communities. Together, we've created a stunning Ilkal textile, which we're incorporating into the guest rooms. This project has been an incredible journey, allowing us to work with talented individuals, learn about their craft, and make a positive impact on the community. It's a testament to the power of contextual design and its potential to drive meaningful change.

VM: Like Shimul and Roshni mentioned, these things are fundamental to our organisation. Whether we're designing a small detail or a large-scale project, there are a few core principles that guide our approach. We've distilled these principles over time, and they're woven into the fabric of our design process. We're deeply contextual. We consider the cultural, climatic and topographical nuances of each site. This approach ensures our designs are thoughtful, responsive and sustainable.

We have a profound respect for craft. We believe in the beauty of human hands shaping materials, as evident in projects like the Leaf House in Nirvana. By working with local artisans and using readily available materials, we create buildings that are not only functional but also come with a strong narrative.

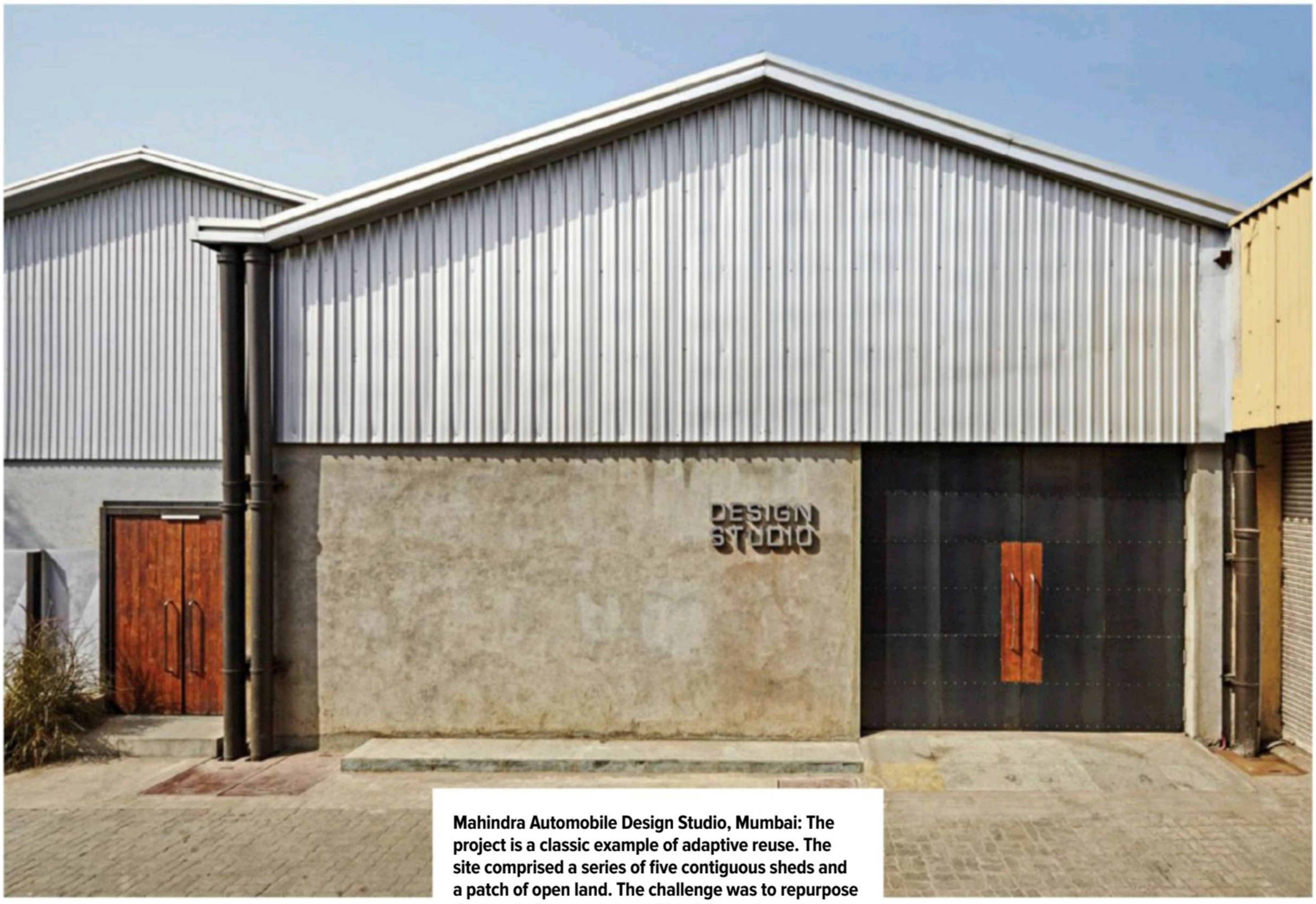
Our designs are guided by a deep commitment to sustainability. By being contextual and climatically responsive, we've always designed buildings that work in harmony with their surroundings. This means incorporating passive design principles, minimising energy consumption and maximising natural light and ventilation. These principles inform everything we do, from the smallest detail to the largest project. They're the foundation upon which we build, and they ensure our designs are not only aesthetically pleasing but also socially, culturally and environmentally sustainable.

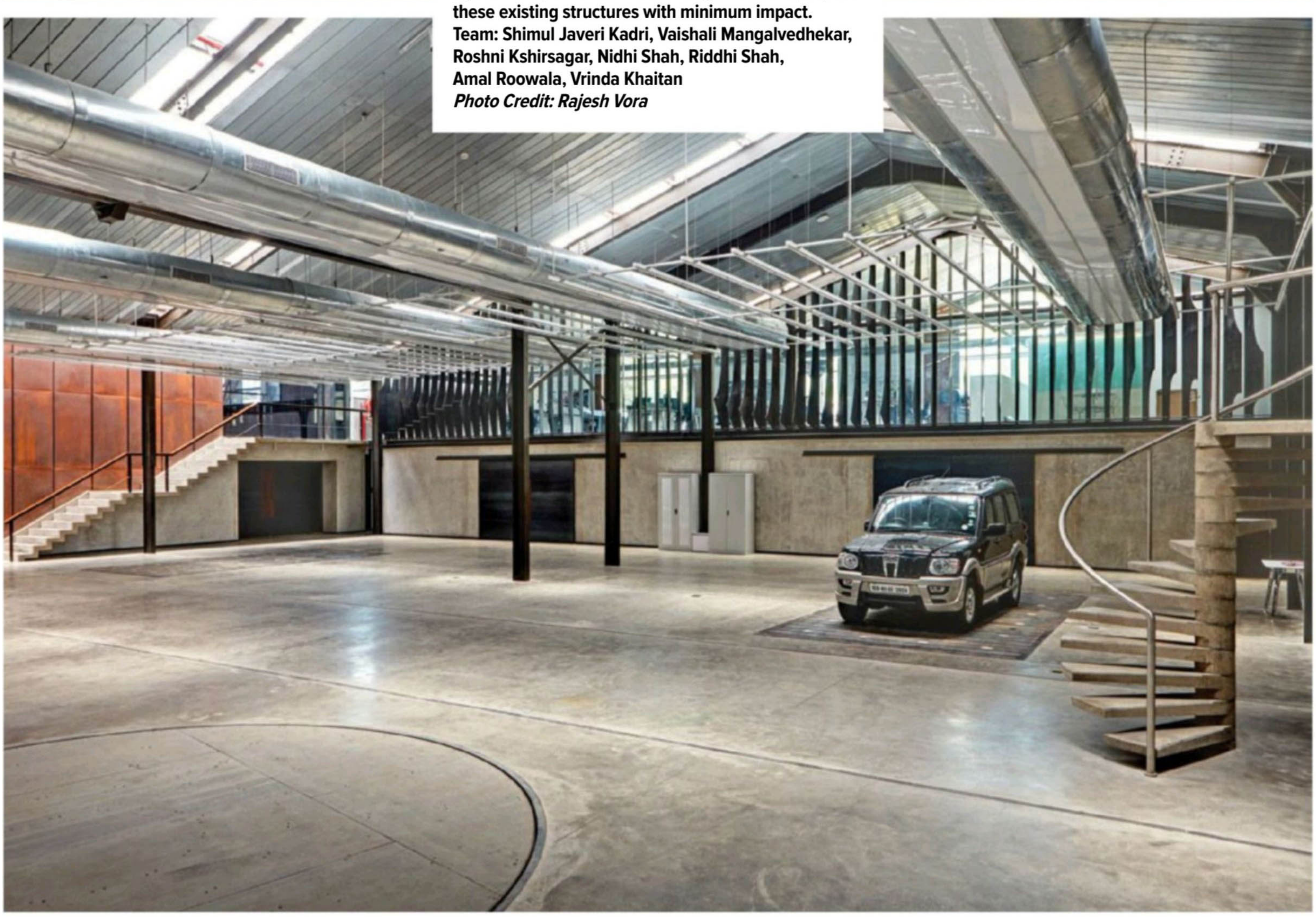
In a way, SJK has set a template in place for design practices. Do you think it paves a way for a new movement in design?
SS: I believe our firm's template for success has been recognised over the past two-three years, sparking interest among many practices. They're intrigued by our hybrid partnership model, remote work policies, and ability to balance work and personal life. Our systems have allowed us to thrive, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many firms struggled. We are often asked how we make it work. The truth is our hybrid model has been tested and proven effective. We've demonstrated that collaboration, flexibility and trust can lead to success.

The architecture profession is facing challenges, particularly in India, where the pedagogical system often leaves graduates unprepared for the realities of practice. As a result, many young architects struggle to sustain themselves in the profession.

> *"The architecture profession is facing challenges, particularly in India, where the pedagogical system often leaves graduates unprepared for the realities of practice. By promoting collaboration, flexibility and work-life balance, we aim to create a more sustainable model for architectural practice."*
>
> —**SARIKA SHETTY,** *Partner, SJK Architects*

Boat Club Apartments, Chennai: Nestled on a 10,000 sq ft trapezoidal corner plot, this exclusive residential building presents four luxurious 4-BHK duplex apartments, ranging from 3500 sq ft to 4500 sq ft. Each residence boasts a private entrance on separate levels, ensuring utmost privacy. The thoughtful design floods the spaces with natural light and ventilation, striking a perfect balance between seclusion and opportunities for social connection.
Team: Shimul Javeri Kadri, Sarika Shetty, Bhavin Patel, Nikita Shahadadpuri, Riddhi Shah, Priyata Bosamia
Photo Credit: Niveditaa Gupta





Mahindra Automobile Design Studio, Mumbai: The project is a classic example of adaptive reuse. The site comprised a series of five contiguous sheds and a patch of open land. The challenge was to repurpose these existing structures with minimum impact.
Team: Shimul Javeri Kadri, Vaishali Mangalvedhekar, Roshni Kshirsagar, Nidhi Shah, Riddhi Shah, Amal Roowala, Vrinda Khaitan
Photo Credit: Rajesh Vora

> *For me, sustainability encompasses not just environmental considerations, but also social and cultural dimensions. We're meticulous about selecting materials that minimise our ecological footprint. Our approach to cultural sustainability focuses on honouring the collective visual memory of communities, keeping traditions alive while embracing evolution, and allowing cultures to adapt and flourish."*
>
> —**SHIMUL JAVERI KADRI,** *Founder & Partner, SJK Architects*

Our firm's approach offers a solution. By promoting collaboration, flexibility and work-life balance, we're creating a more sustainable model for architectural practice. This is especially important for women in architecture, who often face unique challenges in balancing work and personal life.

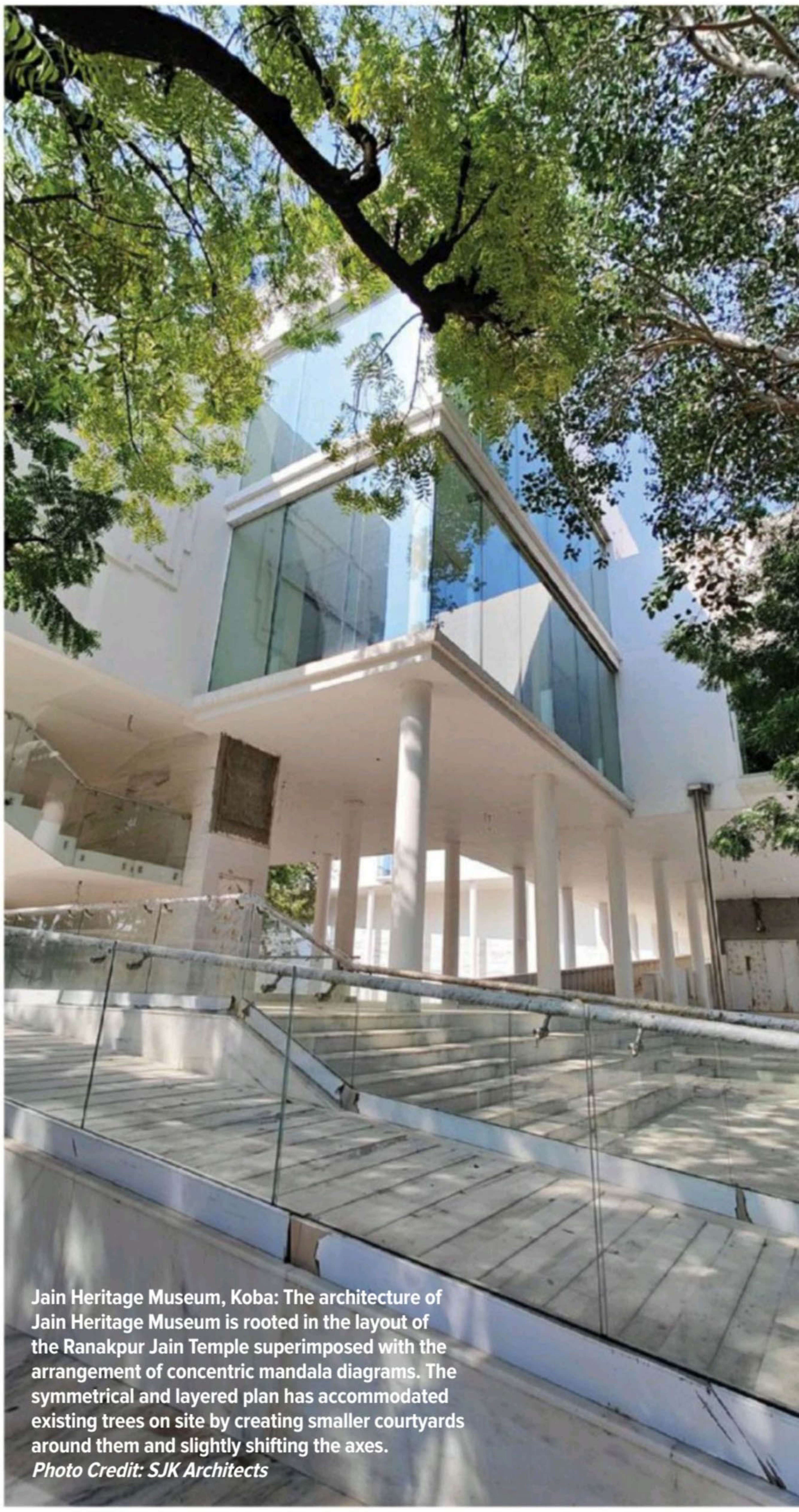
We're proud to be a role model for younger practices, especially women-led firms. By sharing our template and systems, we hope to inspire a new generation of architects to rethink the way they work and collaborate. Ultimately, our goal is to institutionalise our practice, consolidating our thoughts, systems and templates to create a legacy.

VM: I'd like to add a couple of thoughts to the conversation. Sarika's point about hybrid working is interesting, and I think we've all struggled with it at some point. For me, it's clear that having systems in place is crucial, but there's another essential element: trust. We've been fortunate to have built strong relationships within our team and with each other. That trust is the glue that holds everything together. It's not just about having systems; it's about believing in each other.

I've also noticed that our partnership model has had a profound impact on our team, especially the younger architects. Seeing that this isn't a legacy practice, but rather something we've built from scratch, inspires them. They realise that they don't have to start their own firm to have a voice or identity. Our structure offers them a platform to grow and find their own identity within a larger organization. It's exciting to see the impact this has on their commitment and enthusiasm.

From a solo practice to a partnership, how do you envision the future of the firm?

VM: I'd like to share a personal aspiration for SJK Architects, inspired by an essay called 'Mushrooms as Mentors' by Carla Goldstein. This essay explores how patriarchy emphasises dominance and control, whereas nature offers alternative models for leadership. The essay highlights how mushrooms create intricate networks beneath the rainforest, fostering a delicate balance between diverse species. This network enables the ecosystem to thrive, demonstrating that interconnectedness and mutual support can be more powerful than dominance. My hope for SJK is to create a similar network within our organization, where individuals can grow and support one another. We strive to foster a culture where everyone has a voice, freedom to grow, and accountability. As we've grown to over 45 team members, establishing systems to support this vision has become crucial. We're working to create a framework that balances autonomy with accountability, using tools like rating systems to ensure everyone's voice is heard. This is an ongoing process, and we don't have all the answers yet. However, we're committed to creating an organisation that values collaboration, mutual support and collective growth.



Jain Heritage Museum, Koba: The architecture of Jain Heritage Museum is rooted in the layout of the Ranakpur Jain Temple superimposed with the arrangement of concentric mandala diagrams. The symmetrical and layered plan has accommodated existing trees on site by creating smaller courtyards around them and slightly shifting the axes.
Photo Credit: SJK Architects

Established in 2001, SR University's 57-acre campus in Warangal has evolved into a vibrant hub of learning, with a master plan spanning 5.11 lakh sq ft. Guided by a dual ethos, the campus design fosters a distinct identity while providing diverse spaces for students to explore, interact, and grow beyond the classroom.
Team: Shimul Javeri Kadri, Vaishali Mangalvedhekar, Sarika Shetty, Anushri Nivin, Harshini Yohee, Nisha Saraf, Meet Mendpara, Sapna Rohra, Arunima Dube
Photo Credit: Rajesh Vora

> “*I believe that our profession, particularly in interior design, is at a crossroads. We can choose to simply do our job, or we can strive to do it exceptionally well, making a meaningful impact on the people and environments we touch.”*
>
> —**ROSHNI KSHIRSAGAR,** *Partner, SJK Architects*

RK: I think this captures the essence of our firm's vision and the efforts we're making to bring it to life. It's a culmination of everything we've discussed—the power of collective impact, the importance of collaboration, and the value of learning from each other. As individuals, we may not be able to move mountains, but together, we can make a significant difference. It's about creating a ripple effect, where our collective efforts inspire others.

I believe that our profession, particularly in interior design, is at a crossroads. We can choose to simply do our job, or we can strive to do it exceptionally well, making a meaningful impact on the people and environments we touch.

Our partnership is built on the wisdom of 35 years of experience, combined with our individual perspectives and expertise. We continue to learn from each other, and we hope to share that knowledge with others. Ultimately, it's about making a difference, and that's what drives us.

SJK: The ethos we've established has tremendous growth potential. We envision a future where more young professionals, passionate about thought leadership and innovative practice, join us and thrive. Our platform can nurture multiple leaders, benefiting many more individuals and collectively elevating the profession. I am hoping that as worthy people show potential, we will be able to offer more leadership roles. There are many formats that we can take from here on, and I think there are many different formats that other people will continue to create in the architectural space. We will draw from some; we will influence some, and at this point we are really kind of trying to consolidate our learnings and create a vibrant practice for the future, and we will see where it all goes. We see the potential in terms of, we see younger people who would love to have a platform from which they can make an impact, and we see the opportunity in terms of projects that could really benefit from a thoughtful architectural practice, and the aim of SJK is really to marry the two.

Architects have the power to reshape the world we live in. How do you think you can make an impact on the pressing issues of the world?

SJK: I feel the power of the architect is so undervalued. I firmly believe our influence extends far beyond the physical structures we create. One tends to overlook the architect's power to influence the way societies function and the emotional connections people make with their surroundings. In a world often driven by capitalist values, we're committed to weaving emotion, beauty and storytelling into every project. Our goal is to craft environments that resonate with people on a deep, cultural and emotional level.

We strive to create spaces that evoke powerful emotions, spark meaningful connections, and sustain a sense of wonder and joy. Every detail, from material selection to operational energy, is carefully considered to achieve this vision. I feel fortunate to collaborate with visionary clients who share our passion for creating impactful, culturally relevant projects. Together, we can push the boundaries of what's possible and create spaces that inspire, uplift, and leave a legacy.

SHARMILA KUMBHAT: A CHANGEMAKER REDEFINING INDIA'S LIGHTING INDUSTRY AND EMPOWERING FUTURE LEADERS

Kumbhat's entrepreneurial spirit ignited early. At just sixteen, she began working at Metal Craft, a fabrication unit where she mastered technical and managerial skills. By nineteen, she was already a rising star, receiving the Best Female Entrepreneur Award from the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Hungry for greater expertise, she moved to New York, where she spent a decade managing two thriving export companies, gaining invaluable experience in global business strategies.

However, her heart remained in India. Returning to Chennai, she joined her family business, K-Lite Industries—now synonymous with design-forward luminaires and architectural lighting. Her influence was immediate and transformative. She introduced modular systems, streamlined operations, and embraced sustainability, elevating K-Lite into a modern powerhouse. Under her stewardship, the company has supplied lighting to landmark projects such as the Indian Parliament, the Cairo Parliament complex, and sacred sites like the Golden Temple.

Leading the Smart Lighting Revolution

Sharmila Kumbhat, Director, K-Lite Industries

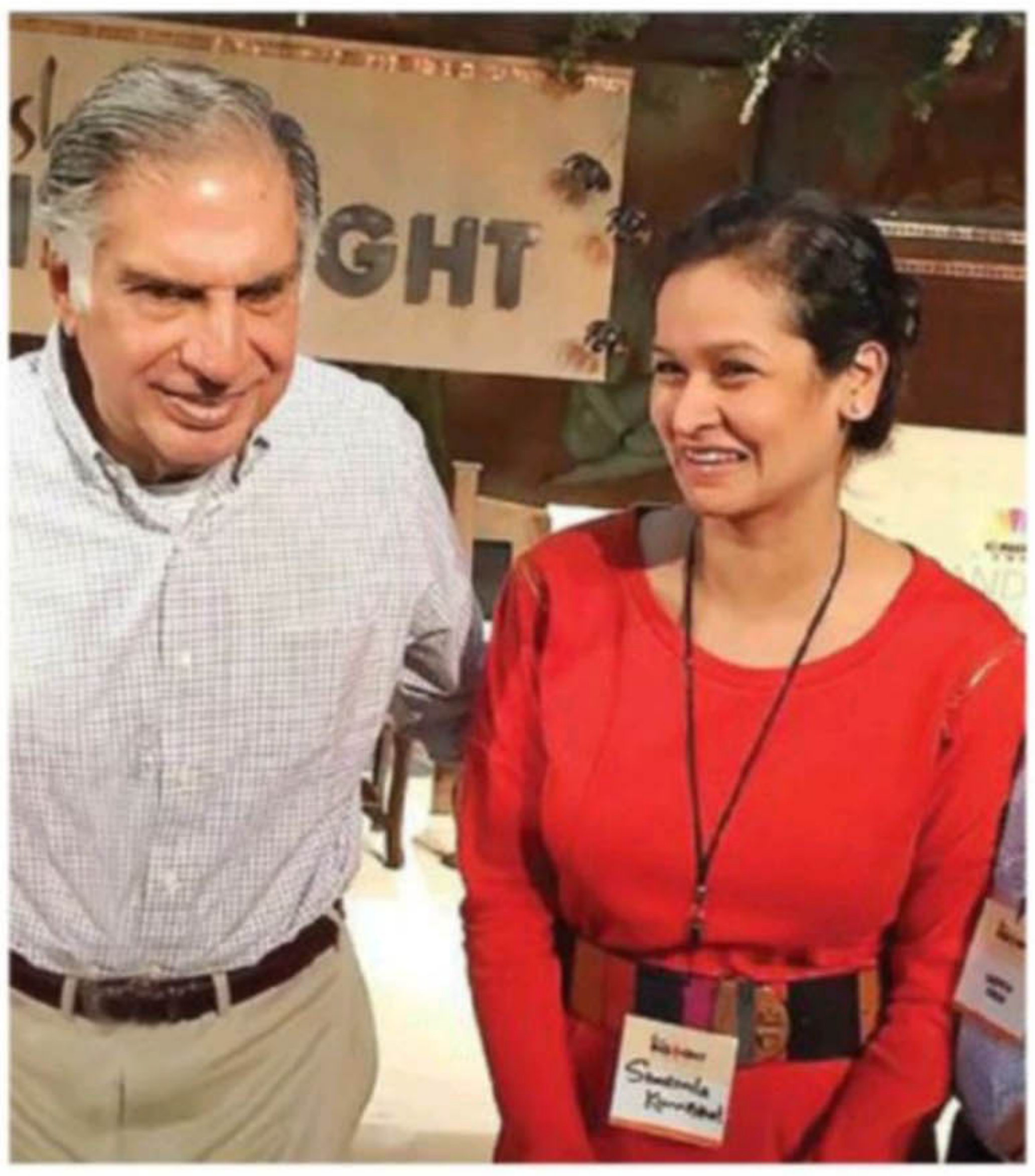
With cities across the globe embracing smart infrastructure, Kumbhat recognised the transformative role of lighting in shaping urban development. Spearheading K-Lite's entry into smart solutions, she launched K-Lite Europe in London to cater to international demand. This expansion cemented K-Lite's reputation as a leader in energy-efficient, urban lighting systems designed for modern cityscapes.

Collaborations with global designers and consultants have further propelled K-Lite's innovation pipeline. Yet Kumbhat remains grounded in her philosophy: "Take one step at a time and give your best." This pragmatic yet visionary approach has ensured that sustainability and design excellence stay at the core of the company's growth.

Empowering Women in Industry

In an industry where women are often underrepresented, Kumbhat has championed inclusivity and gender equity. Over half of K-Lite's workforce comprises women—a remarkable achievement in the traditionally male-dominated manufacturing sector. Her leadership style is collaborative, fostering an environment where creativity and empowerment thrive.

For Kumbhat, empowerment is not just a concept; it's a personal mission. She actively mentors young professionals, inspiring them to embrace bold aspirations in business and leadership. By breaking industry stereotypes, she has demonstrated that women can not only succeed but lead with distinction. "Everyone has unique potential," she says, a belief reflected in her company's ethos.



Reflecting on her journey, she recalls her time with Ratan Tata, whose leadership ethos continues to inspire her drive for innovation and integrity

A Beacon of Vision and Impact

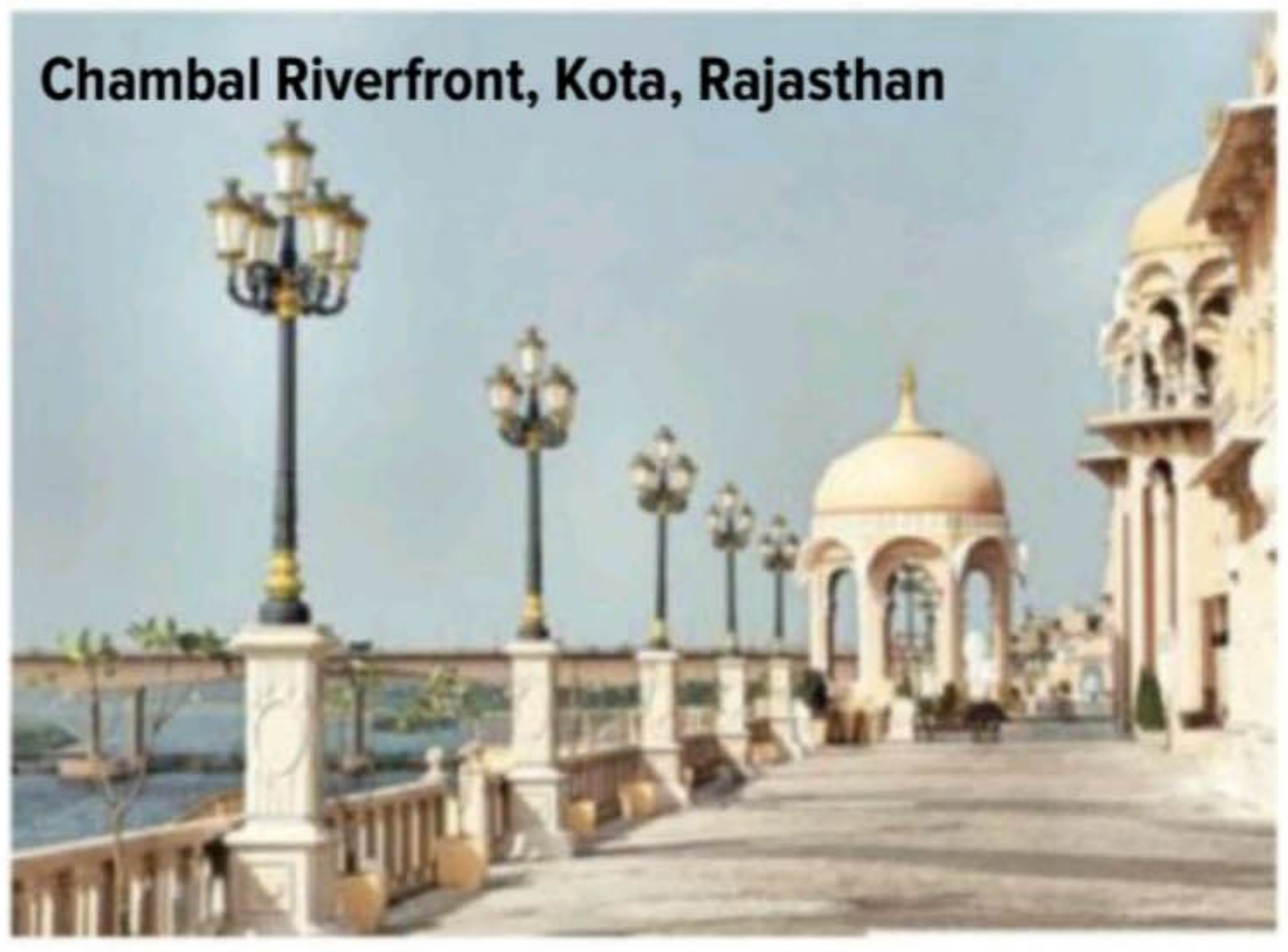
As she looks to the future, Kumbhat's ambitions remain bold yet purposeful. Her focus on smart lighting, sustainable innovation, and global expansion aligns with the evolving needs of urban spaces. But perhaps her greatest legacy is the inspiration she offers others. By nurturing a culture of equality and innovation, she's lighting the path for future leaders to follow.

In an era where true leaders uplift others, Sharmila Kumbhat exemplifies what it means to lead with purpose. Through her work at K-Lite, she is not only redefining the lighting industry but also pushing the boundaries of what visionary leadership can achieve.

Parliament of India

Ayodhya Ram Path

Varanasi City



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What's on my vision board?

What starts as a cluster of images, textures, and inspirations on a designer's mood board, in due course, transforms into the spaces we inhabit. Since ages, this visual conceptualisation has been the foundation of architectural metamorphosis, but as we dive deeper into the digital age, the art of mood boarding is undergoing a fascinating progression. In this first installment of our two-part series, we step into the mindset of some of India's most sought-after architects and interior designers.

Mood boards serve as more than just aesthetic collages—they are powerful communication tools, strategic planning documents, and windows into the designer's mind. February's edition brings insights from Shimona Bhansali (Design Hex), Smitha Zachariah (SZ Design), Amit Aurora and Rahul Bansal (groupDCA), and Shalini Chandrashekar and G.S. Mahaboob Basha (Taliesyn Design & Architecture).

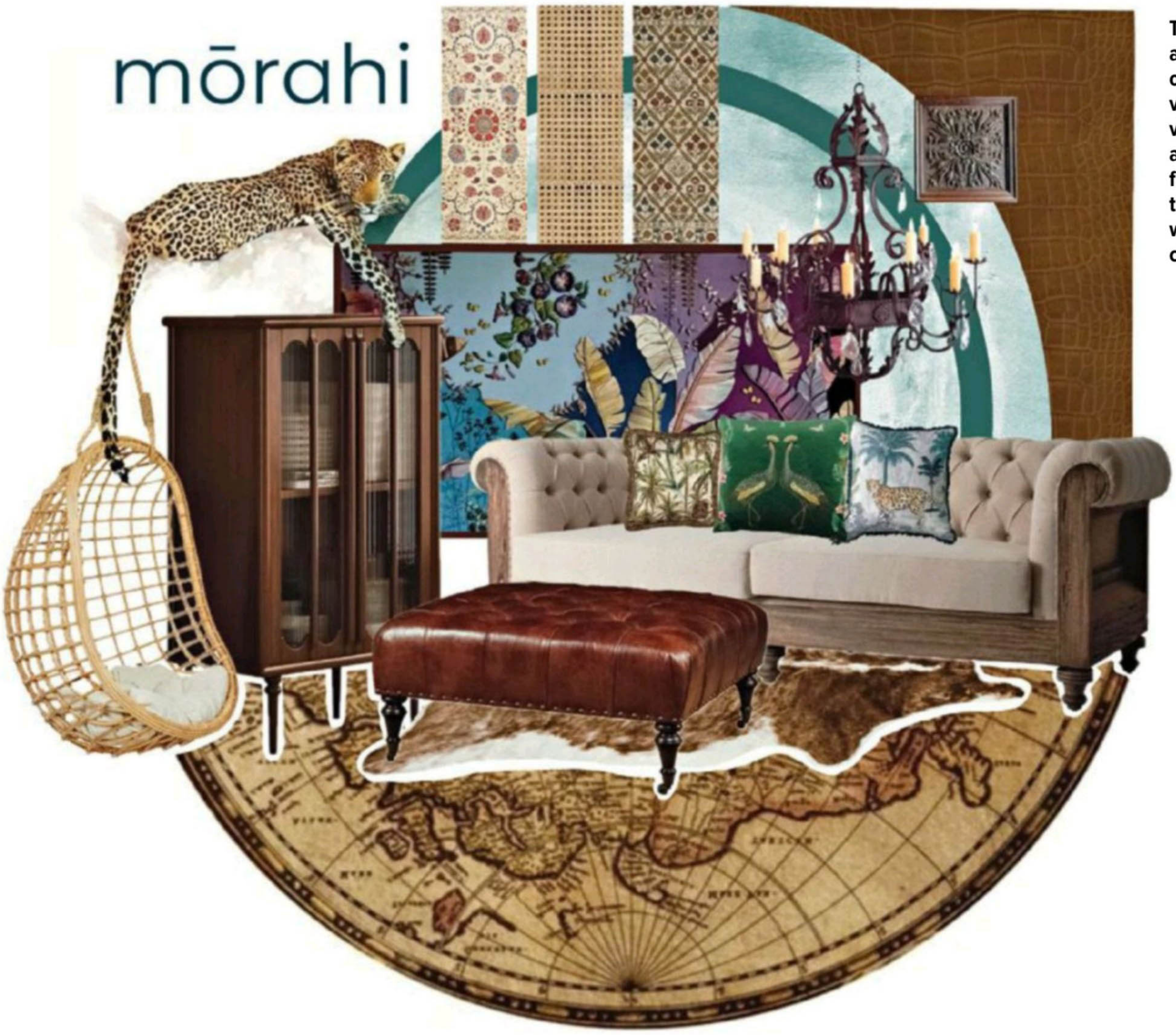
Be it choosing the perfect palette, to juxtaposing materials that evoke emotion, this story uncovers the painstaking thought processes behind each designer's creative journey. Through this comprehensive visual investigation, we uncover the method behind the madness of mood board creation, offering you, our dear readers, unprecedented access to an architects' imagination.

PRODUCED BY KASHISH KAUSHAL

SHIMONA BHANSALI

Founder & Principal Designer, Design Hex

> When embarking on the creation of a mood board, our foremost consideration is that it must encapsulate the essence of the envisioned space. The board serves as a scaled-down representation, where each element reflects the intended atmosphere and aesthetic.”



The mood board for Morahi artfully encapsulates the essence of a globetrotter's haven, where vintage allure meets contemporary vibrance. Central to the design are the carefully curated antique furniture pieces, each exuding timeless charm with their rich, weathered patinas and classic craftsmanship

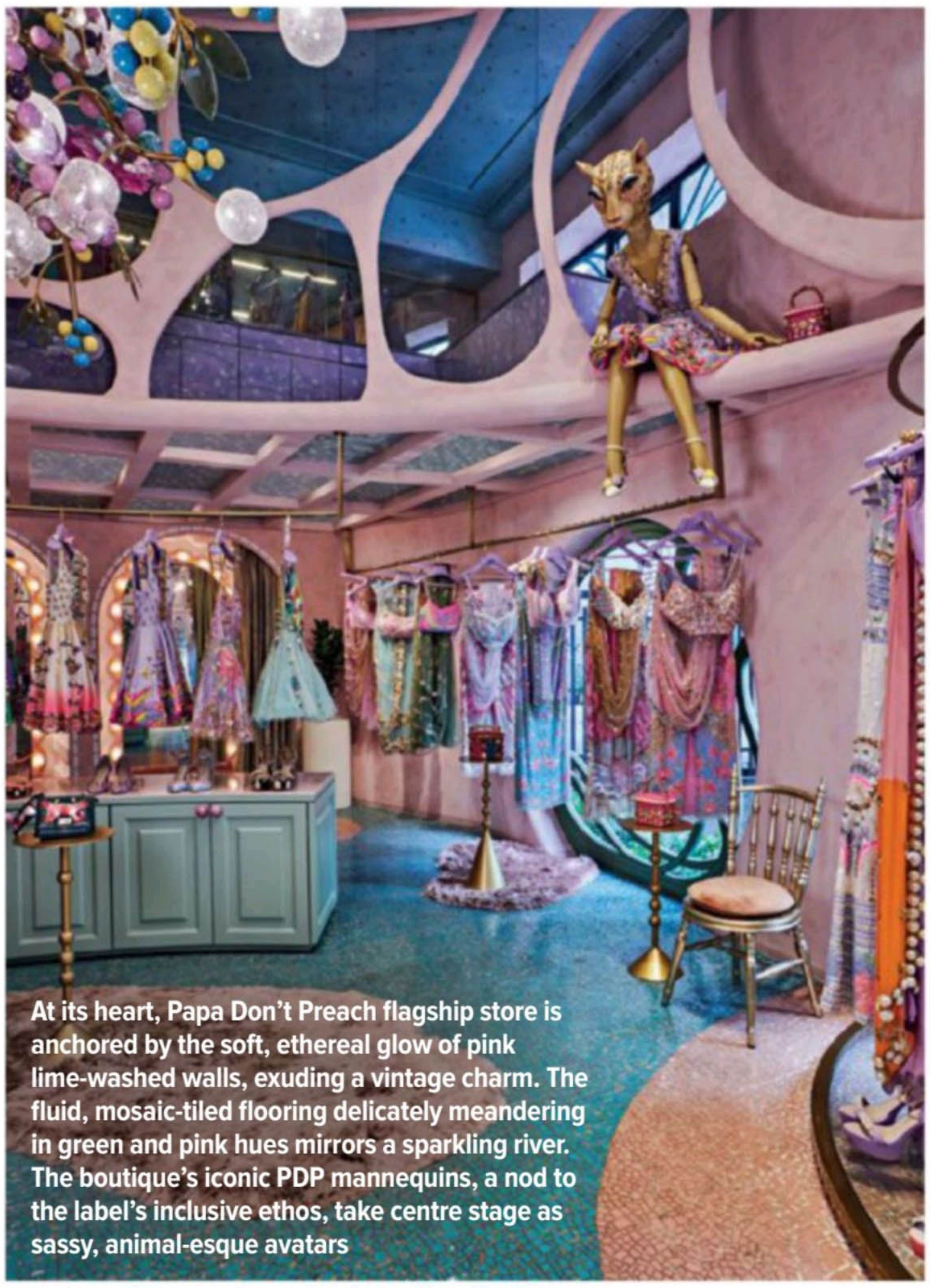
How has your mood board creation process evolved with digital tools, and what balance do you strike between physical and digital elements in your conceptual phase?

The adoption of digital tools in mood board creation has revolutionised the process, offering both efficiency and sustainability. Digital platforms enable faster concept development and flexible presentation, allowing for real-time adjustments and easy collaboration. The balance between physical and digital elements lies in recognising the strengths of each medium. Visual components like colours, shapes, and compositions are best explored digitally, offering versatility and swift iteration. However, tactile aspects—such as textures and materials—retain their value in physical form, where their sensory qualities can be truly experienced. By distinguishing between what should be visual and what needs to be tactile, we can seamlessly combine both approaches, optimising the creative process while maintaining a sense of materiality and authenticity.

Walk us through your thought process when you begin a new mood board - what elements do you consider first, and how do you layer colours, textures, and materials to build your narrative?

When embarking on the creation of a mood board, our foremost consideration is that it must encapsulate the essence of the envisioned space. The board serves as a scaled-down representation, where each element reflects the intended atmosphere and aesthetic. For instance, if a space is defined by a dominant feature such as lime plaster, we allow that material or colour to occupy a substantial portion of the board, setting the tone for the rest of the composition.

The interplay of textures and colours, underscored by the clients' adventurous spirit, creates a captivating visual narrative that is both luxurious and grounded, evoking the heart of far-flung adventures and the comfort of home

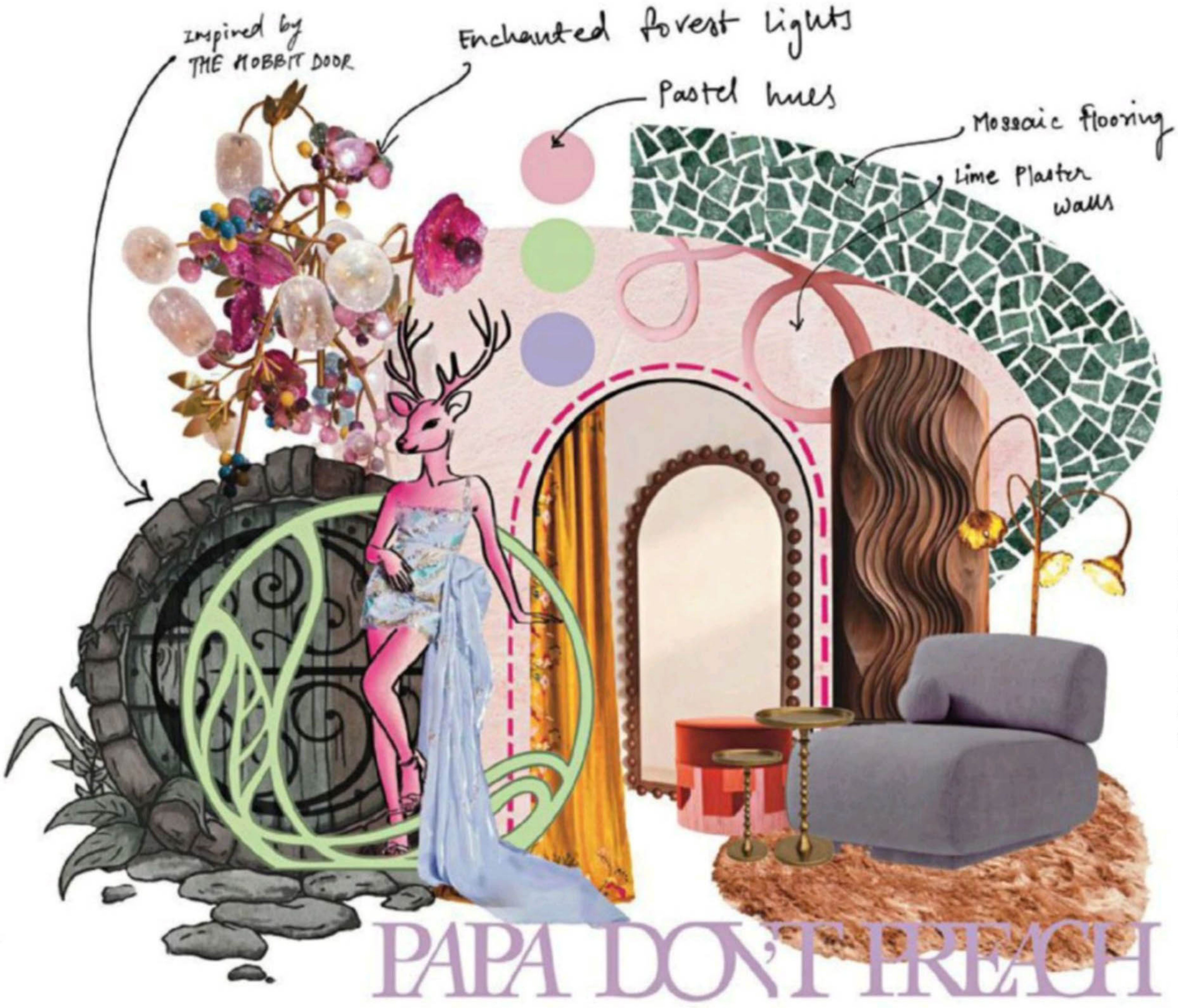


At its heart, Papa Don't Preach flagship store is anchored by the soft, ethereal glow of pink lime-washed walls, exuding a vintage charm. The fluid, mosaic-tiled flooring delicately meandering in green and pink hues mirrors a sparkling river. The boutique's iconic PDP mannequins, a nod to the label's inclusive ethos, take centre stage as sassy, animal-esque avatars

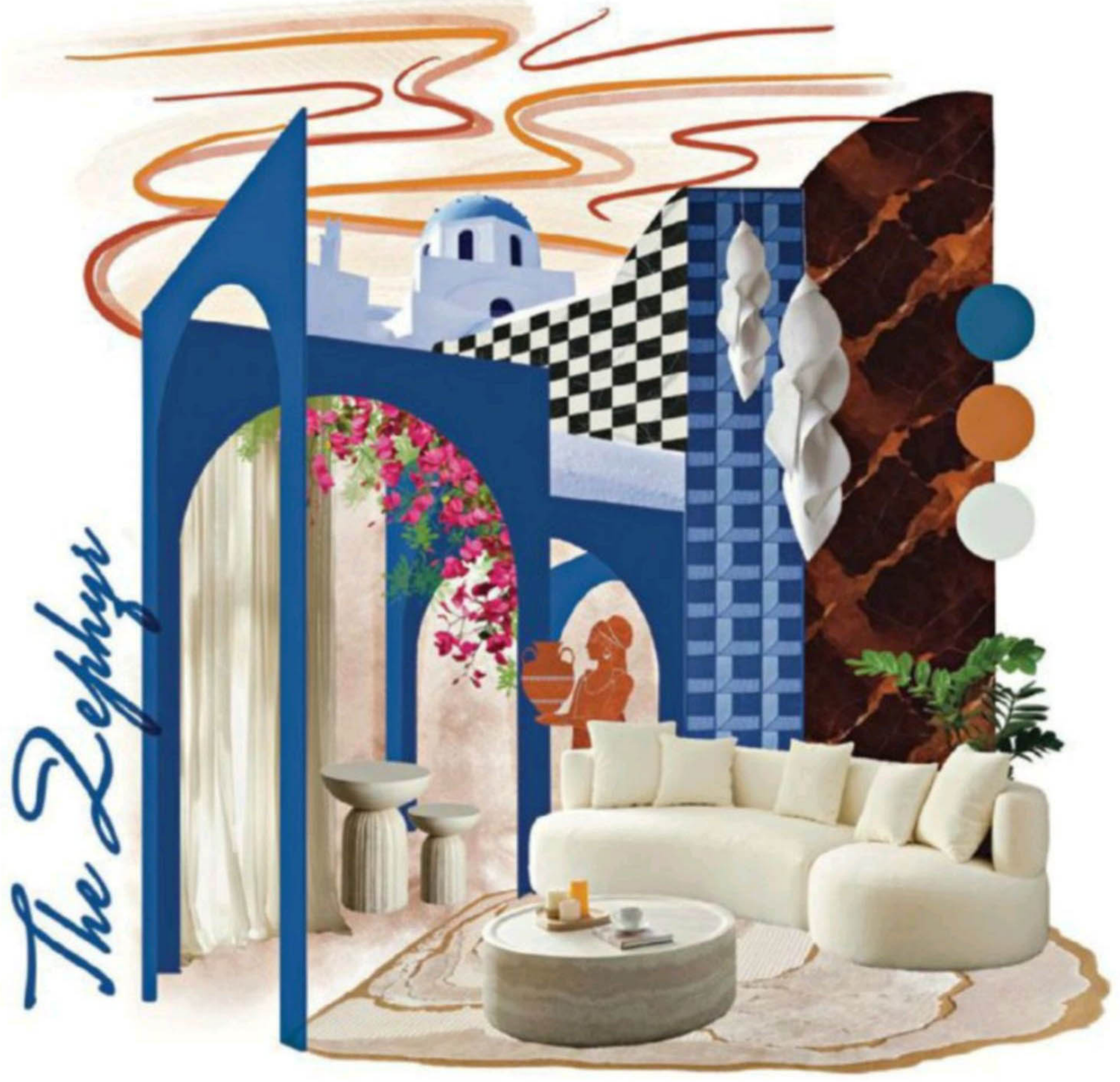
Layering follows a deliberate hierarchy, where textures, colours, and materials build upon this foundation, each element enhancing the others to form a cohesive narrative. While mood boards are undoubtedly about exploring combinations, they also function as an artistic interpretation of the final design, allowing us and stakeholders to visualise the space with greater clarity and precision. The result is a visual dialogue that conveys both intention and ambiance.

How do you use mood boards to communicate with clients, and what techniques have you developed to help them understand your vision through these visual tools?
We use mood boards as a visual narrative to convey our design vision to clients, ensuring that each board is thoughtfully curated to reflect the essence of their space. Rather than presenting materials and products in a disjointed or linear manner, we compose them in a cohesive, layered arrangement that mirrors the intended flow and atmosphere of the final design. This method allows clients to immediately recognise how the individual elements relate to one another and to the broader concept. Additionally, we tailor the mood board to resonate with the client's existing space, incorporating elements that they can easily envision within their environment. By creating a tangible connection between the design and their own surroundings, we foster a deeper understanding, helping them visualise the transformation and ensuring alignment with their expectations.

Can you share an example of a project where the mood board played a pivotal role in shaping the final design outcome? What were the key elements that translated most successfully from concept to reality?

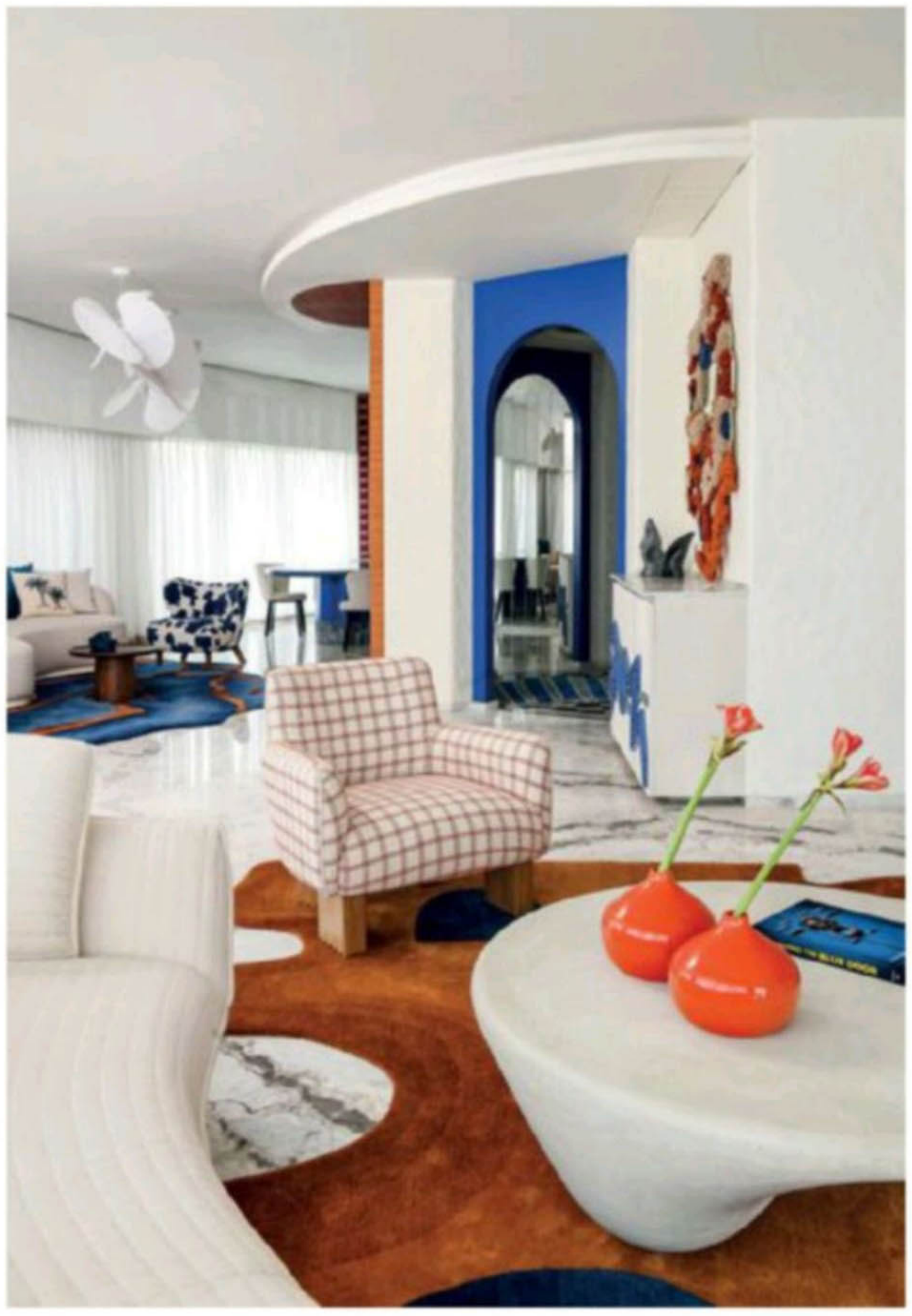


The mood board for the Papa Don't Preach flagship store is a captivating symphony of whimsy and wonder, meticulously curated to evoke the fantastical essence of a storybook world. The archways, reminiscent of hobbit-holes, punctuate the space, framing each scene with a sense of magic and mystery



The mood board for The Zephyr is a masterclass in synthesising the ethereal allure of Greek aesthetics with the dynamic pulse of modern luxury. Central to its composition are the striking blue arches, evoking the azure vistas of the Aegean

Each element on the mood board reflects detailed curation, where contrast and complement coexist, and the richness of history converges with the pulse of contemporary life. The pristine whiteness of the sofa and walls creates a canvas of quietude, inviting the eye to roam freely across the textural richness and intricate patterns that punctuate the space



> Mood boards will also evolve into dynamic, interactive platforms, offering more immersive, real-time visual experiences, where clients can engage with 3D renderings and explore a range of design possibilities."

For The Zephyr project, the mood board was essential in shaping a design that captured the essence of Greece without resorting to clichés. Our goal was to highlight Greek elements in a fresh, modern context, and the mood board served as the perfect tool to explore this vision. By combining minimalist white backgrounds with unexpected pops of colour, we reflected both the timeless beauty of Greece and its vibrant culture. This contrast not only defined the aesthetic but also added an exciting, contemporary edge. The mood board allowed both our team and the client to align on key design choices early in the process, ensuring a cohesive and harmonious outcome. Ultimately, it helped translate an abstract concept into a fully realised space that felt authentic, yet refreshingly modern, striking the perfect balance between tradition and innovation.

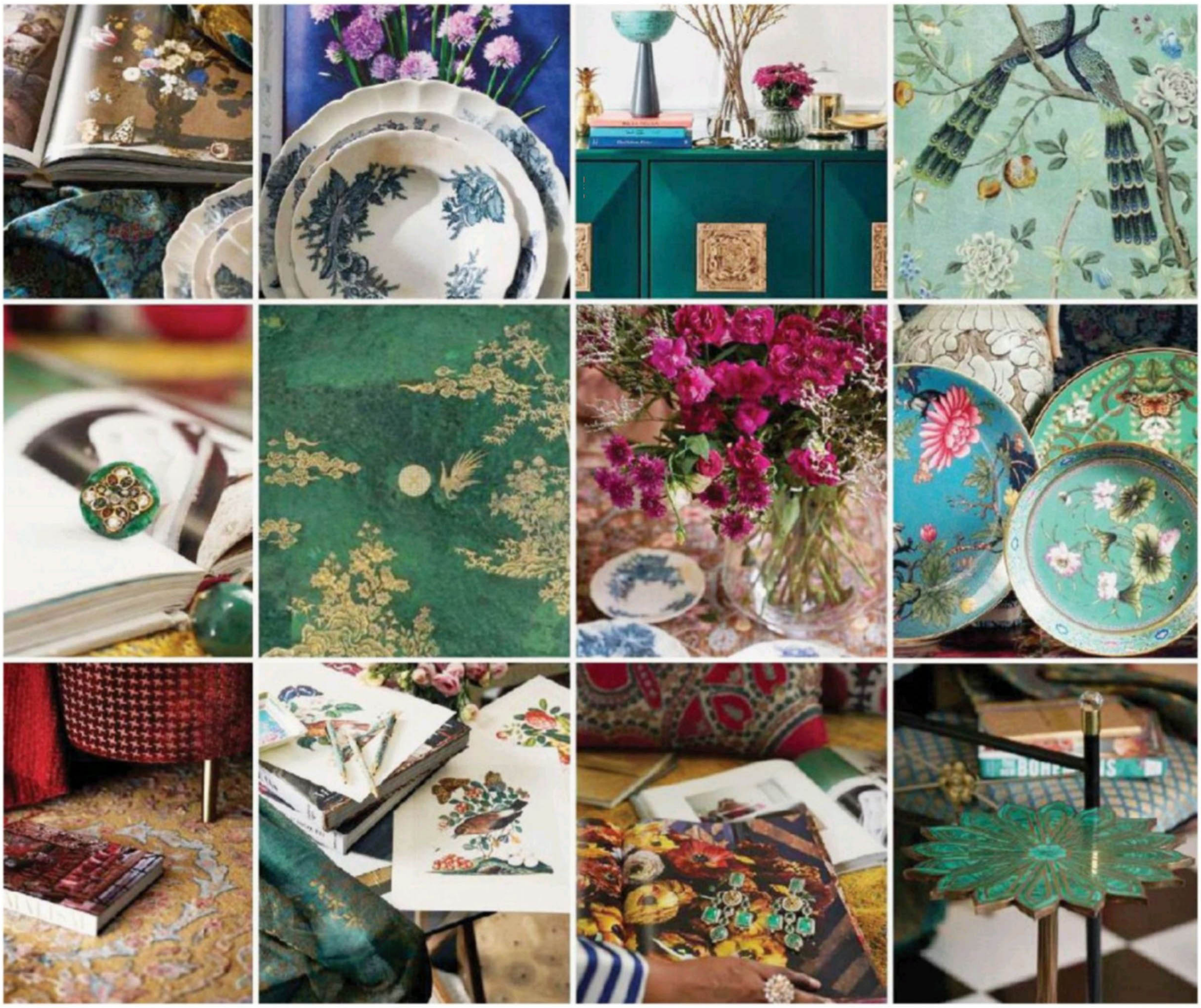
Looking ahead to 2025, what emerging materials, technologies, or design philosophies do you anticipate will dominate mood boards? How are factors like biophilic design, smart home integration, and climate-responsive architecture influencing your conceptual process?

Looking ahead to 2025, mood boards will increasingly reflect a more harmonious fusion of nature, technology, and sustainability. We anticipate a shift towards integrating elements that evoke a stronger connection to the natural world, with organic textures and materials becoming key visual components. At the same time, functionality will take on a more intuitive, adaptable dimension, with design choices that cater to evolving lifestyles and environmental considerations. Mood boards will also evolve into dynamic, interactive platforms, offering more immersive, real-time visual experiences, where clients can engage with 3D renderings and explore a range of design possibilities. As new materials emerge, boards will feature an expanded range of innovative, eco-friendly finishes, encouraging the use of materials that respond intelligently to both the environment and user needs. The result will be mood boards that not only capture aesthetic vision but also reflect the evolving priorities of the built environment.

SMITHA ZACHARIAH

Creative Head, SZ Design

“When starting a new mood board, I always begin with the carpet—it serves as the grounding element and the centrepiece of my narrative. This anchoring point informs the story I want to tell and sets the tone for the entire space. From there, I layer inspiration images, carefully curating a print language and iconography tailored to the project’s essence.”



For this board, we've curated a collection of images that reflect the elements, details, and broader ideology we stand for. A rich palette of mineral jade weaves seamlessly through the story. What I love the most is the effortless layering of prints, patterns, and colours, as if they were always meant to be. Cultures intertwine—from the Orient (my current muse) to exquisite vintage plates, botanical illustrations, and my enduring love for jewellery. Each detail could tell its own story, yet together, they create one magical narrative—a perfect embodiment of what I love about this craft.

How has your mood board creation process evolved with digital tools, and what balance do you strike between physical and digital elements in your conceptual phase?

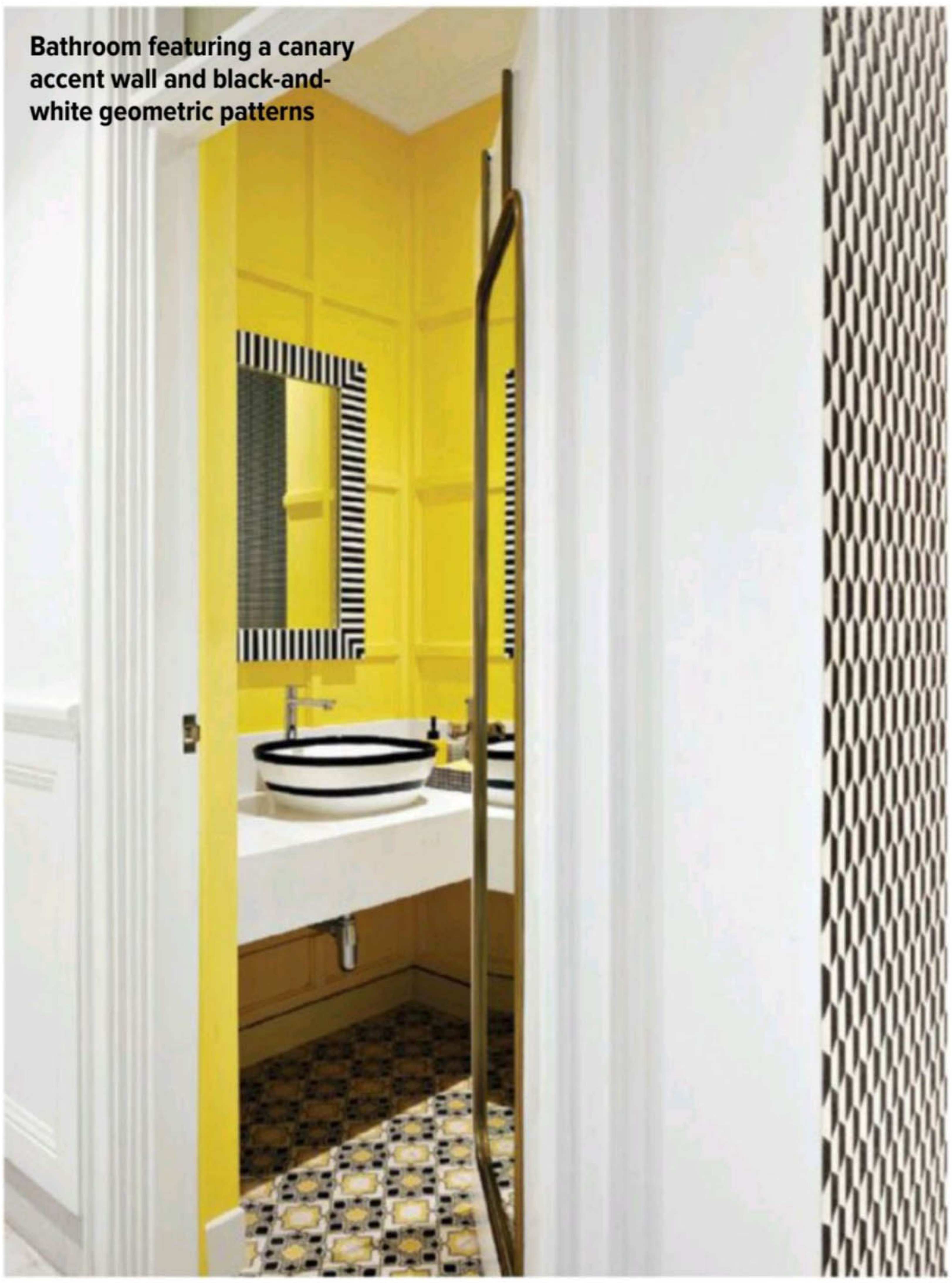
As an interior designer with a love for colour and intricate details, my mood board process has evolved significantly with digital tools. Platforms and softwares let me organize palettes, patterns, and textures seamlessly, offering endless possibilities to refine compositions and visualize ideas efficiently. Yet, the tactile joy of physical elements remains irreplaceable. Handling fabric swatches, feeling textures, and layering samples bring colours to life in ways digital tools cannot. I balance both by beginning digitally, setting a thematic foundation, then incorporating physical elements for depth and authenticity. This blend enriches my conceptual phase, making it dynamic and inspiring.

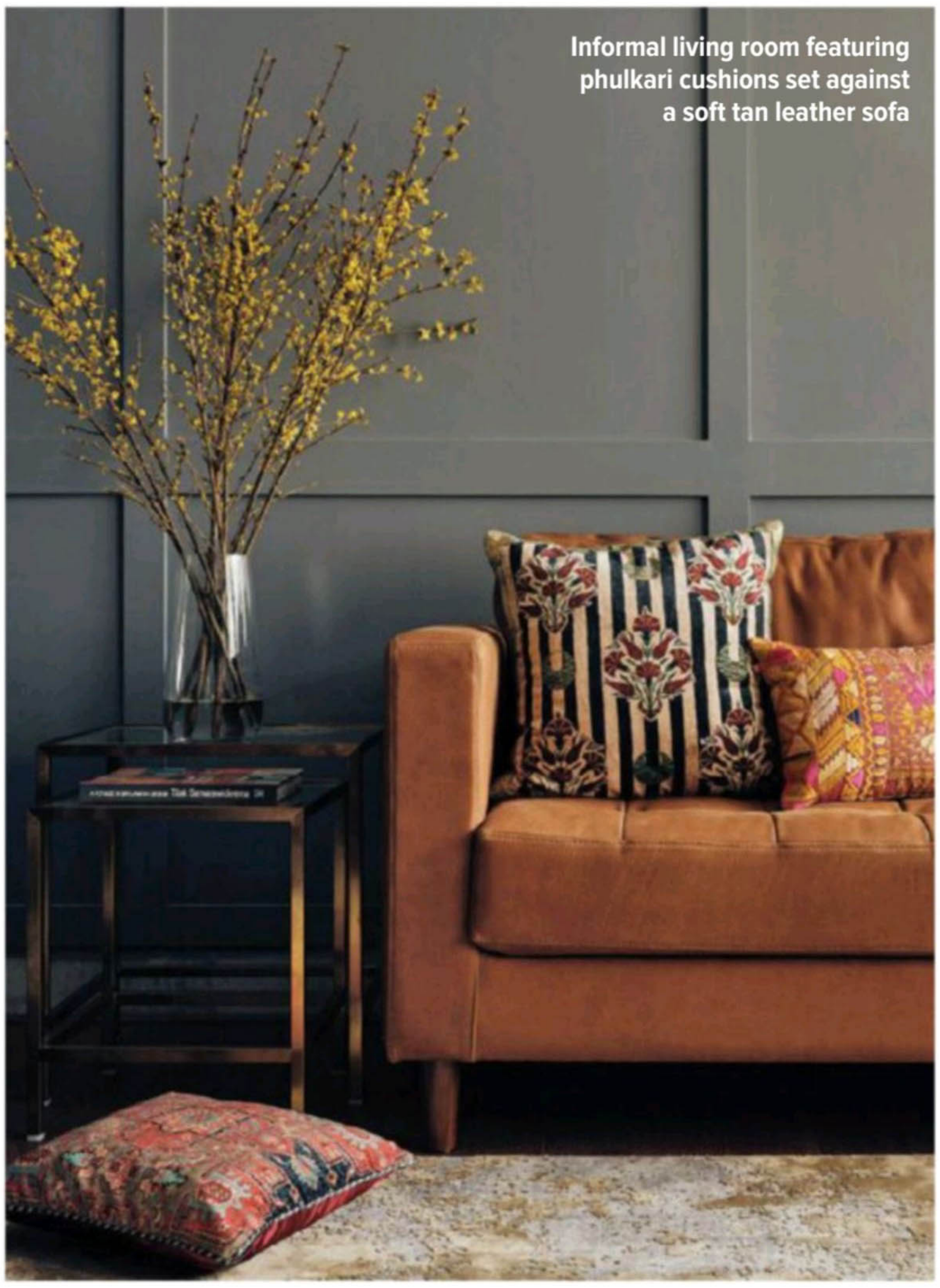
Walk us through your thought process when you begin a new mood board - what elements do you consider first, and how do you layer colours, textures, and materials to build your narrative?

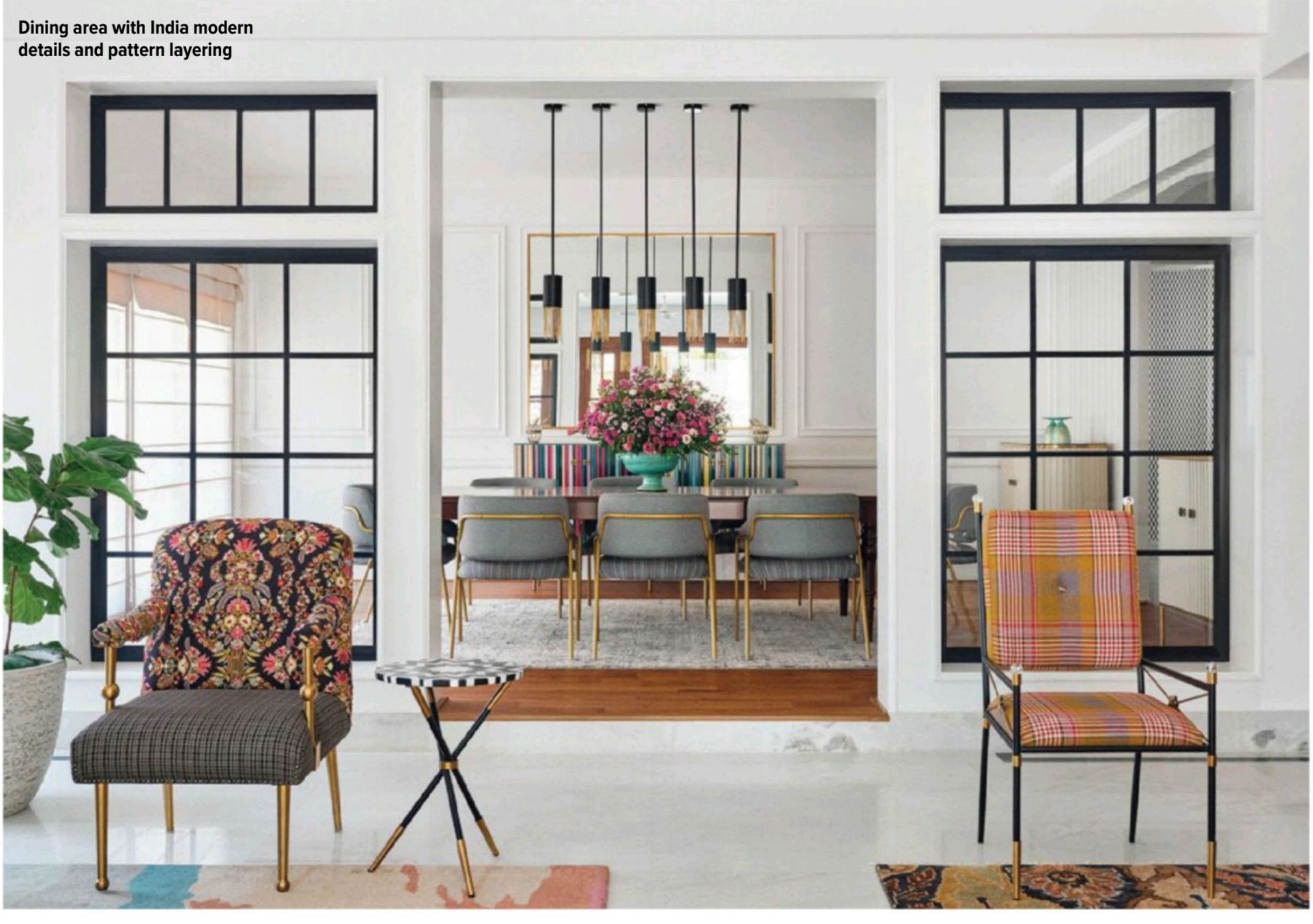
When starting a new mood board, I always begin with the carpet—it serves as the grounding element and the centrepiece of my narrative. This anchoring point informs the story I want to tell and sets the tone for the entire space. From there, I layer inspiration images, carefully curating a print language and iconography tailored to the project's essence. My approach to color is deeply instinctive; I continuously layer, add, and edit until the palette feels just right. This process of refinement extends beyond the mood board, evolving on-site and continuing until the final piece of art is perfectly in place.

How do you use mood boards to communicate with clients, and what techniques have you developed to help them understand your vision through these visual tools?

Mood boards are an essential visual tool for communicating my design vision to clients. They act as a curated collection of images, colours, textures, and materials that evoke the mood and aesthetic we aim to achieve. My process starts with an in-depth consultation to understand the client's lifestyle, preferences, and project goals.


Bathroom featuring a canary accent wall and black-and-white geometric patterns


Informal living room featuring phulkari cushions set against a soft tan leather sofa


Dining area with India modern details and pattern layering

All Photographs by Gokul Rao Kadam

Living room with a rich layering of vintage objects from the client's collection

> My love for detail and colour drives me to craft narratives that celebrate India's rich craftsmanship while embracing innovation, creating spaces that honor tradition and modernity in harmony."

From there, I create a digital or physical mood board that reflects our discussion, featuring images of furniture, finishes, colour palettes, and design elements. These boards serve as a tangible representation of the concept, making it easier for clients to visualize the final outcome and provide meaningful feedback.

Can you share an example of a project where the mood board played a pivotal role in shaping the final design outcome? What were the key elements that translated most successfully from concept to reality?

One of our recent projects, an India-modern home crafted for the most wonderful clients, perfectly exemplifies how a mood board can shape the final design outcome. The home's soul was deeply rooted in craft and the essence of modern India. Our mood board served as a blueprint, capturing every detail—from colours, textures, and yarns to tile patterns and wall finishes. It became a visual starting point that guided the entire process. In this project, the translation from mood board to reality was seamless, achieving an exceptional level of accuracy and bringing the envisioned space to life with beauty and precision.

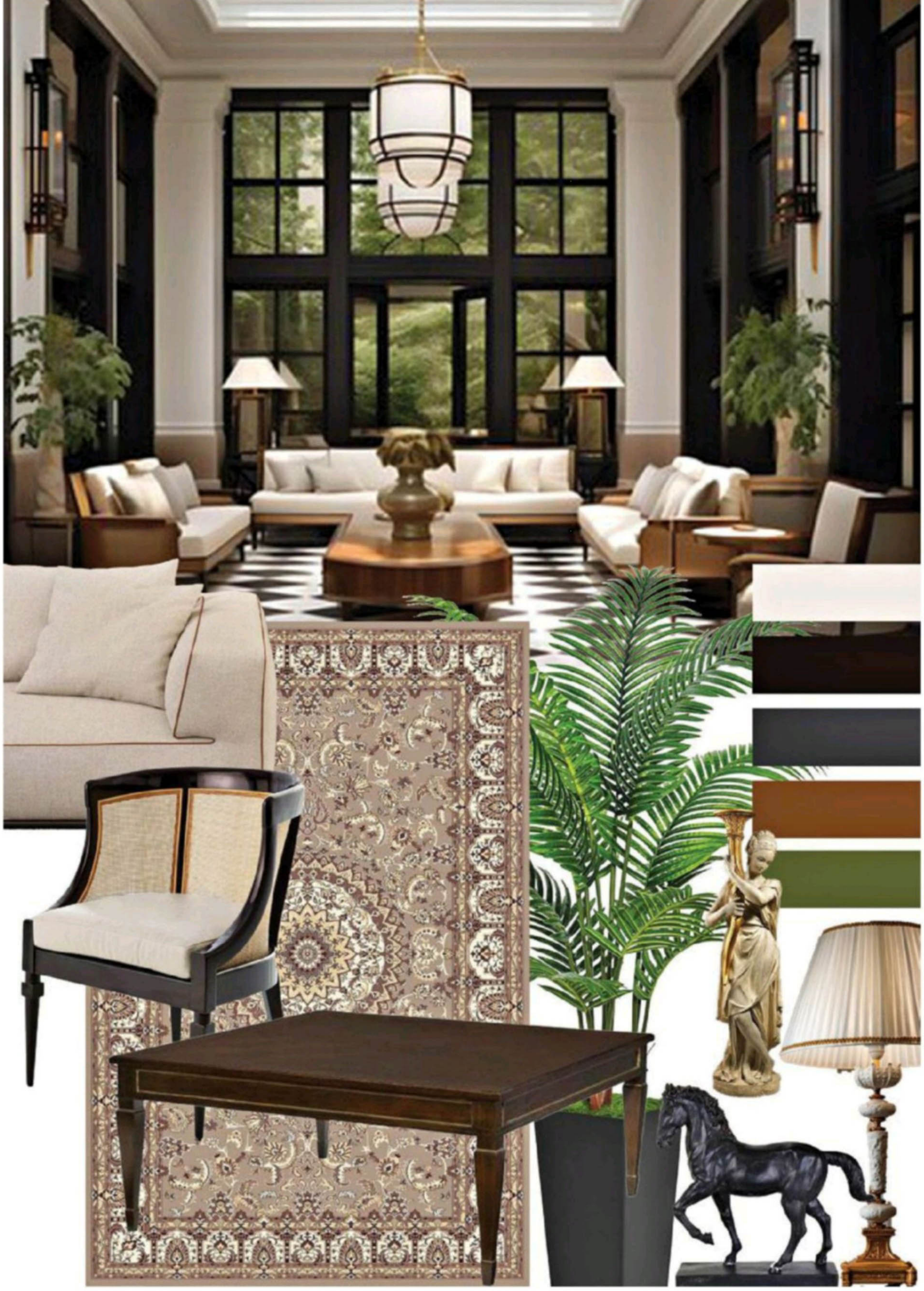
Looking ahead to 2025, what emerging materials, technologies, or design philosophies do you anticipate will dominate mood boards? How are factors like biophilic design, smart home integration, and climate-responsive architecture influencing your conceptual process?

In 2025, mood boards will reflect a blend of biophilic design, smart technologies, and climate-responsive architecture, especially in India modern homes. Sustainable materials like recycled metals, eco-conscious textiles, and natural stone will dominate, embodying responsible luxury. Biophilic elements such as earthy palettes and organic textures will connect interiors to nature. My love for detail and colour drives me to craft narratives that celebrate India's rich craftsmanship while embracing innovation, creating spaces that honor tradition and modernity in harmony. ✚

AMIT AURORA & RAHUL BANSAL

Partners, groupDCA

> “When starting a new mood board, we analyse the project’s core—its purpose, context, and the emotions it should evoke. This foundation shapes the choice of colours, textures, and materials. Colours set the tone, whether calm, bold, or inviting, while textures add depth, from smooth, polished surfaces to raw, organic finishes.”



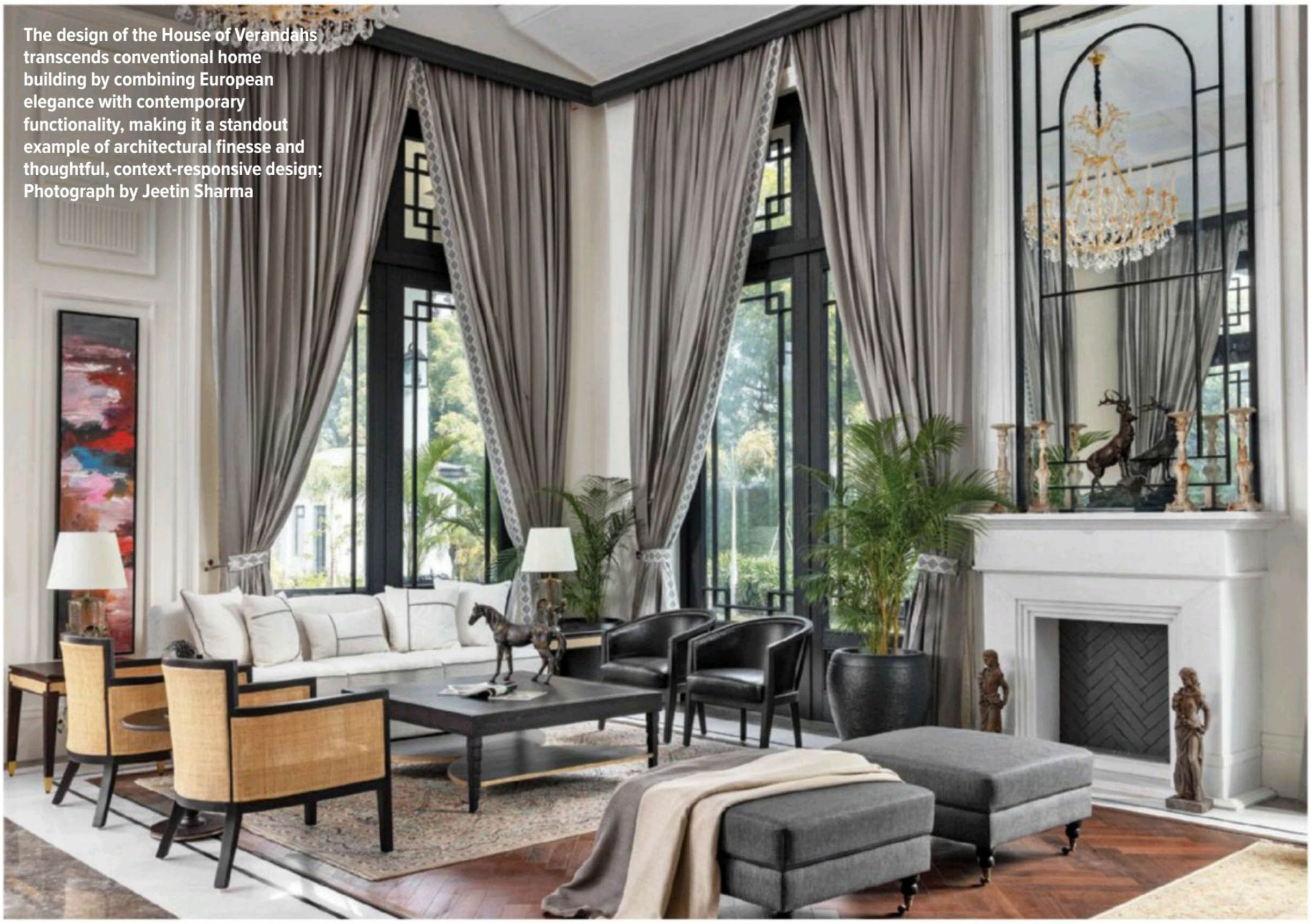
The House of Verandahs is a colonial-style residence in central New Delhi that blends the timeless aesthetics of old British bungalows with functional elements like verandahs drawn from traditional Indian construction. Vaulted ceilings, black and white chequered flooring, vintage wooden furniture, and intricate wainscoting combine to evoke a sense of timeless sophistication

How has your mood board creation process evolved with digital tools, and what balance do you strike between physical and digital elements in your conceptual phase?

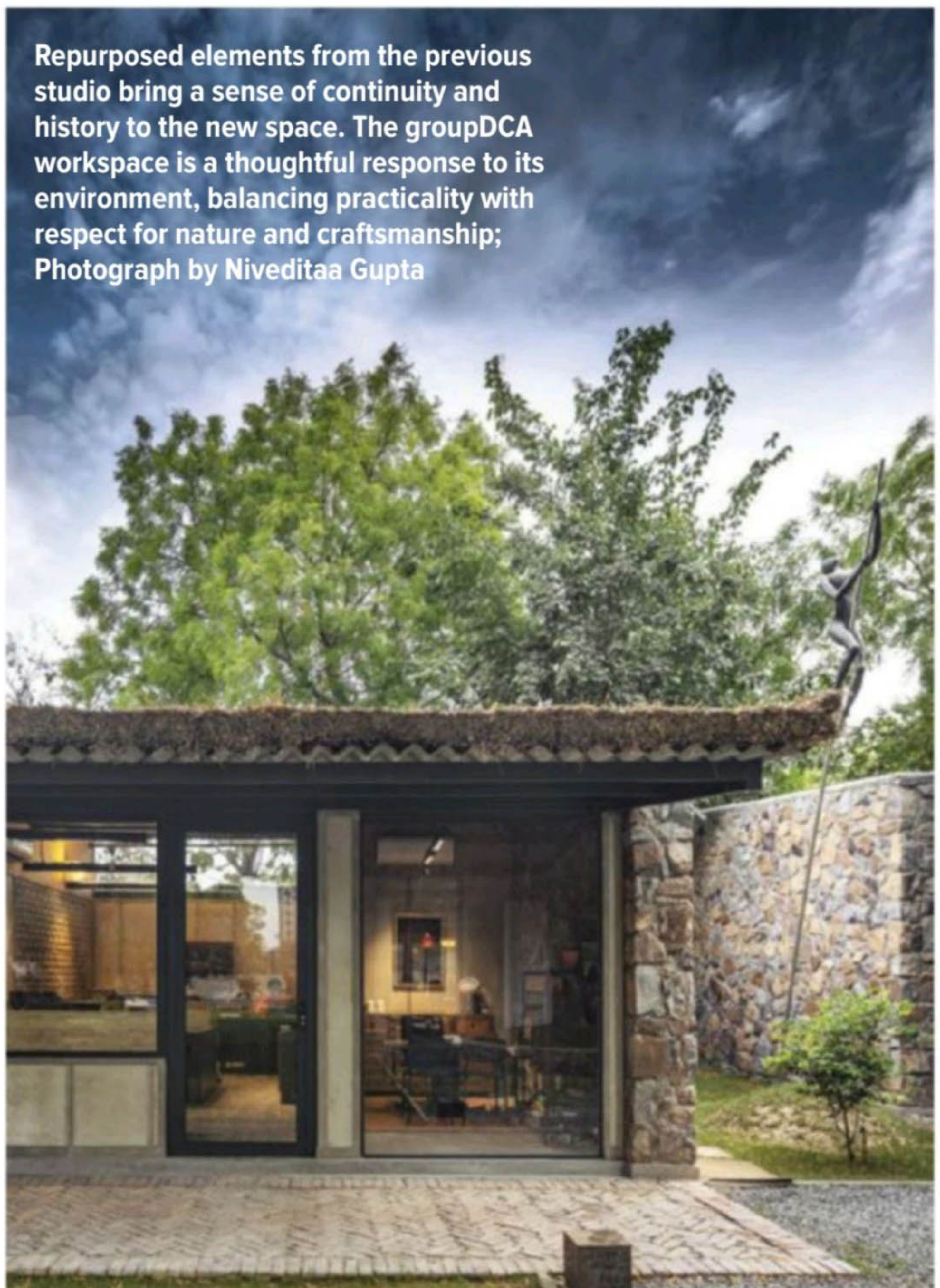
Digital tools have streamlined the process of creating mood boards, offering efficiency, precision, and a wealth of inspiration at our fingertips. Yet, physical elements remain essential, bringing depth and authenticity that digital platforms cannot replicate. By blending the two, we bridge imagination and reality—digital boards help us visualise ideas swiftly. At the same time, physical samples like fabrics, stone, and wood ground the concept in materiality and help us experience the tangible character of the space. This balance ensures our designs are innovative and rooted, feel physically comfortable and thoughtfully designed.

Walk us through your thought process when you begin a new mood board - what elements do you consider first, and how do you layer colours, textures, and materials to build your narrative?

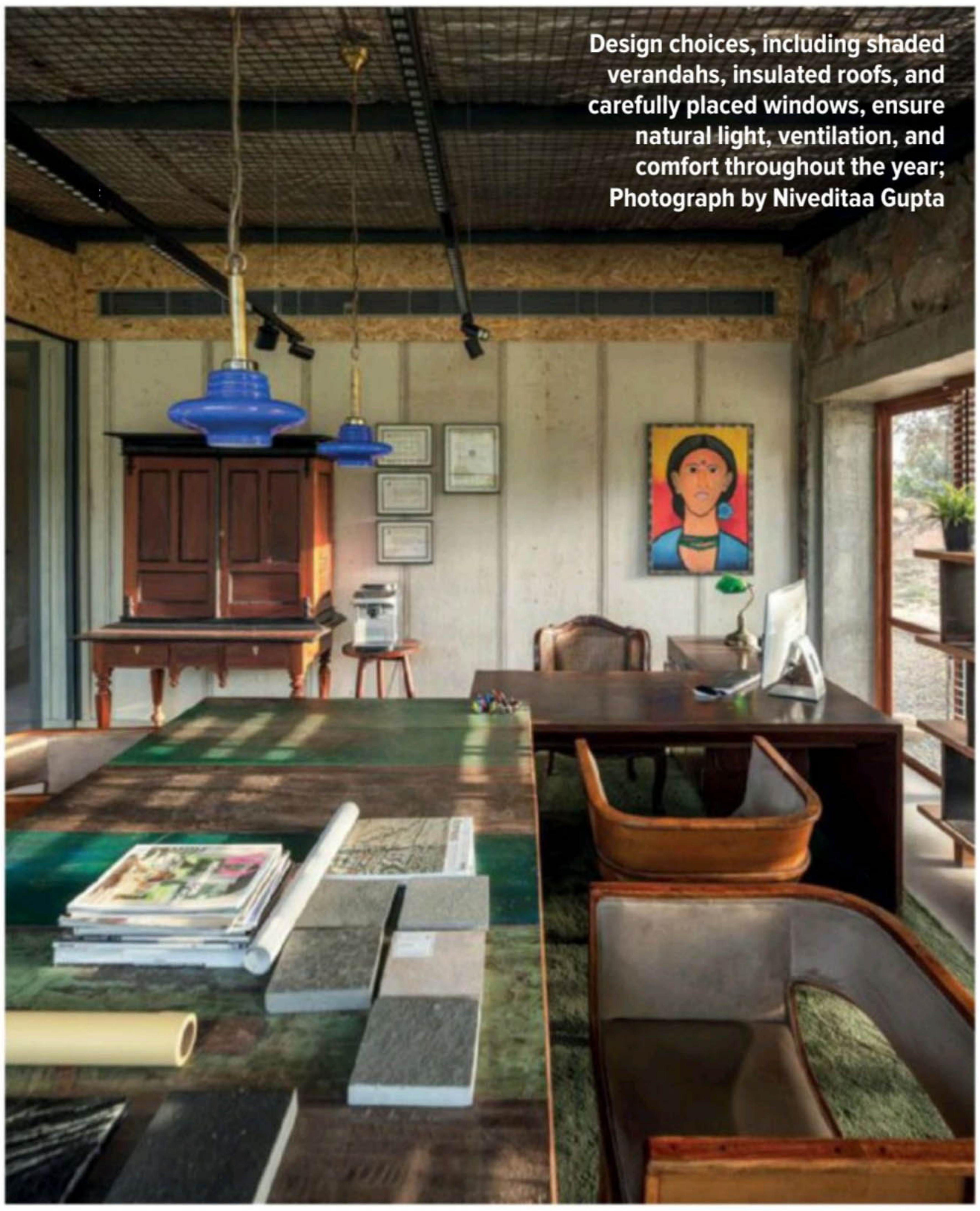
When starting a new mood board, we analyse the project's core—its purpose, context, and the emotions it should evoke. This foundation shapes the choice of colours, textures, and materials. Colours set the tone, whether calm, bold, or inviting, while textures add depth, from smooth, polished surfaces to raw, organic finishes. Materials tie it all together, anchoring the narrative in authenticity. We build layer by layer, ensuring each element complements the others, creating a cohesive story that reflects the project's identity while sparking a sense of connection and curiosity.



The design of the House of Verandahs transcends conventional home building by combining European elegance with contemporary functionality, making it a standout example of architectural finesse and thoughtful, context-responsive design; Photograph by Jeetin Sharma



Repurposed elements from the previous studio bring a sense of continuity and history to the new space. The groupDCA workspace is a thoughtful response to its environment, balancing practicality with respect for nature and craftsmanship; Photograph by Niveditaa Gupta



Design choices, including shaded verandahs, insulated roofs, and carefully placed windows, ensure natural light, ventilation, and comfort throughout the year; Photograph by Niveditaa Gupta

On the Delhi-Gurugram border, groupDCA Studio reflects climate-conscious design and sustainability. The layout fragments into blocks that sit naturally within the lush landscape, preserving existing trees and creating spaces that connect with the outdoors

> "Mood boards are our bridge to clients, translating abstract ideas into a visual language they can connect with. We curate them to reflect the project's essence, using colours, textures, and materials that resonate with its story."

How do you use mood boards to communicate with clients, and what techniques have you developed to help them understand your visionthrough these visual tools?

Mood boards are our bridge to clients, translating abstract ideas into a visual language they can connect with. We curate them to reflect the project's essence, using colours, textures, and materials that resonate with its story. We layer these with references like sketches, photographs, and material samples, creating a tactile and immersive experience that helps with better understanding. We also encourage open dialogue, ensuring clients see how each element contributes to the larger vision. This approach helps align expectations and brings clarity and collaboration from the conceptual phase.

Can you share an example of a project where the mood board played a pivotal role in shaping the final design outcome? What were the key elements that translated most successfully from concept to reality?

In one of our recent residential projects, the mood board became the cornerstone of the design process. The concept focused on creating a retreat-like feel to the space, with earthy tones, natural textures, and a mix of wood, stone, and soft fabrics. These elements guided every decision, from material selection to lighting and finishes. A key success was the seamless transition of the board's layered textures—raw finishes, warm timber accents, and muted upholstery—into the final space. The mood board ensured a balanced vision, bringing the initial concept to life with clarity and purpose.

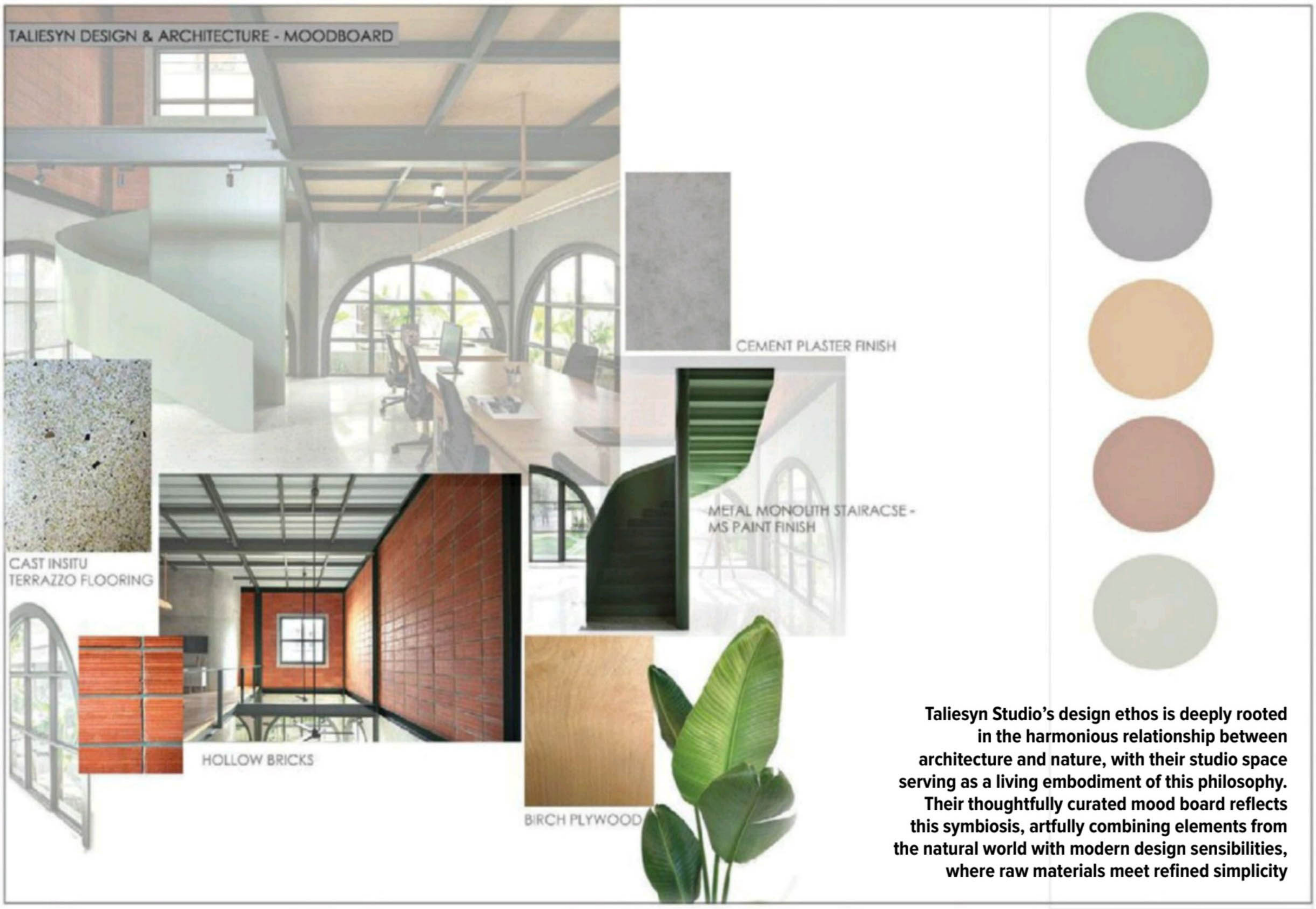
Looking ahead to 2025, what emerging materials, technologies, or design philosophies do you anticipate will dominate mood boards? How are factors like biophilic design, smart home integration, and climate-responsive architecture influencing your conceptual process?

In 2025, we foresee mood boards embracing materials like carbon-neutral composites, recycled finishes, and adaptive glazing, reflecting the push for sustainability. Biophilic design will remain central, with organic textures and earthy palettes creating deeper connections to nature. Smart home integration is influencing the inclusion of sleek, minimalistic tech-friendly designs, while climate-responsive architecture drives us to explore materials and layouts that adapt to their environment. These philosophies are reshaping our conceptual process, ensuring that every design is not only innovative but also environmentally conscious and deeply attuned to human well-being.

SHALINI CHANDRASHEKAR & G.S MAHABOOB BASHA

Principals and Co-Founders - Taliesyn Design & Architecture

> Our mood board creation process has evolved with digital tools. It has become much easier and quicker to iterate, giving us more options to explore and refine our concepts. The ability to conduct research online and access vast imagery has made the process faster and allows us to fine-tune details more precisely."


TALIESYN DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE - MOODBOARD
CEMENT PLASTER FINISH
METAL MONOUTH STAIRACSE - MS PAINT FINISH
CAST INSITU TERRAZZO FLOORING
HOLLOW BRICKS
BIRCH PLYWOOD

Taliesyn Studio's design ethos is deeply rooted in the harmonious relationship between architecture and nature, with their studio space serving as a living embodiment of this philosophy. Their thoughtfully curated mood board reflects this symbiosis, artfully combining elements from the natural world with modern design sensibilities, where raw materials meet refined simplicity

How has your mood board creation process evolved with digital tools, and what balance do you strike between physical and digital elements in your conceptual phase?

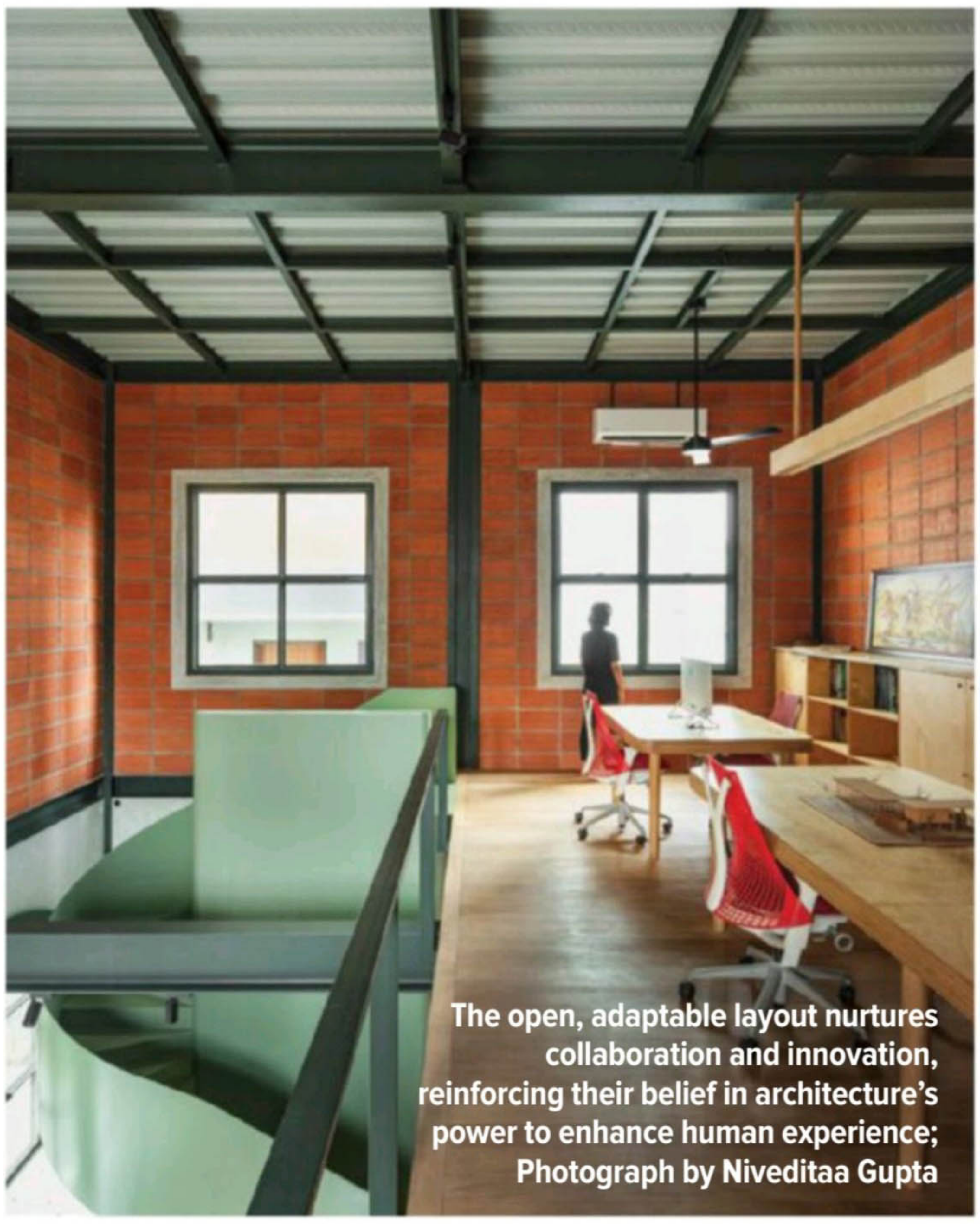
Our mood board creation process has evolved with digital tools. It has become much easier and quicker to iterate, giving us more options to explore and refine our concepts. The ability to conduct research online and access vast imagery has made the process faster and allows us to fine-tune details more precisely. However, we also recognise the importance of maintaining the analogue side of design. There should be a balance between both. We like to start with physical materials—cutouts, sketches, textures—because they give us a tactile connection to the project. Then, we move to digital tools to refine and bring the mood board to life. Digital tools, especially AI-generated imagery, are incredibly helpful and make things much more efficient, but they don't replace the essence of the analogue approach.

Walk us through your thought process when you begin a new mood board - what elements do you consider first, and how do you layer colours, textures, and materials to build your narrative?

Our first consideration is context when we begin a new mood board. The site's context plays a pivotal role in shaping the direction of the design. We think about the environment, the local culture, and how to incorporate elements that reflect the surrounding area.

After we have gone through initial sketches, our mood board usually starts in a more monochrome phase, focusing on neutral tones and basic forms. This phase helps us refine the spatial arrangement and overall structure. The board evolves as materials come into play—introducing colours, textures, and layers that deepen the narrative.

The studio's design manifests the deliberate interplay of terracotta and cement panels, set against a backdrop of abundant natural light and lush greenery; Photograph by Niveditaa Gupta



The open, adaptable layout nurtures collaboration and innovation, reinforcing their belief in architecture's power to enhance human experience; Photograph by Niveditaa Gupta

Throughout, the context drives everything, from colour choices to the materials we use.

We generally use a subtle narrative that doesn't overpower but resonates with the environment. Mood boards also help us convey the feel of the material, ensuring the design feels connected to its environment.

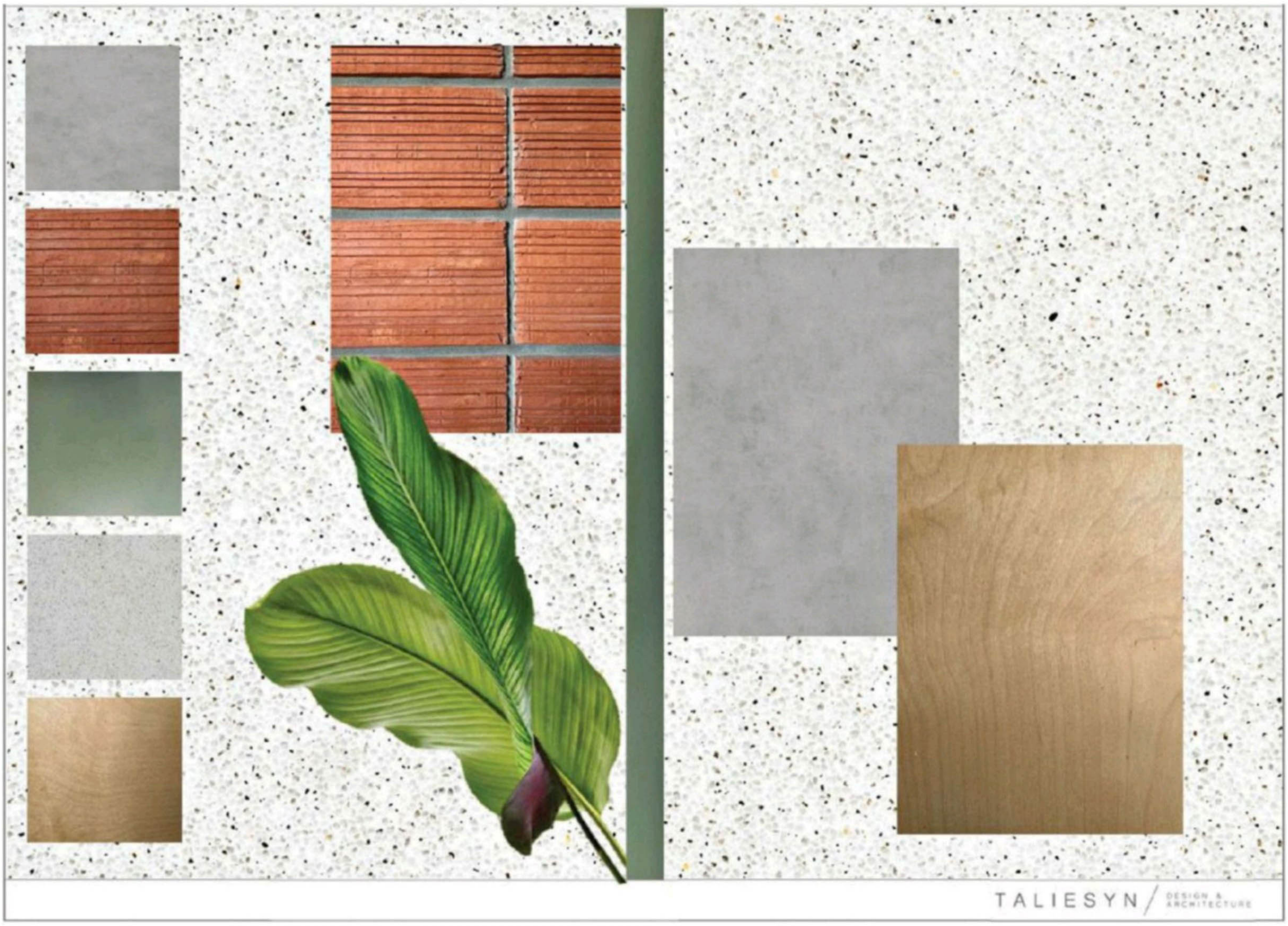
How do you use mood boards to communicate with clients, and what techniques have you developed to help them understand your vision through these visual tools?

We use mood boards as an easy way to communicate our vision with clients, starting at the conceptual stage. They help lay the foundation for the design process, which evolves as we move forward. Throughout this journey, the client's involvement is key, and the mood board becomes a collaborative, organic tool that adapts as the design progresses. We also create mockups on-site and take photos to communicate how things are shaping up visually. This back-and-forth process allows us to refine the design and make it more site-specific, ensuring we align with the client's vision while allowing the project to evolve naturally.

Can you share an example of a project where the mood board played a pivotal role in shaping the final design outcome? What were the key elements that translated most successfully from concept to reality?

Our Taliesyn Studio is a great example of how the mood board played a pivotal role in shaping the final design outcome. We drew

The materiality and textures within the space work in concert to create a grounded environment that captures the essence of modern vernacular architecture; Photograph by Niveditaa Gupta



From material selection to building systems, every aspect of the studio space demonstrates their holistic approach to sustainable design, creating an environment where contemporary architecture honors both nature and human needs

> Our material palette often leans toward natural elements like wood, stone, and earthy tones. We aim to create a connection to nature, designing spaces that feel grounded, harmonious, and timeless."

inspiration from nature, using a similar material palette but varying the textures. Green represented nature, while the terracotta created an earthy, grounded feel. We also created terrazzo on-site with a subtle finish alongside cement finishes to bring warmth and rustic charm to the space.

The overarching themes of sustainability and contemporary vernacular were essential to the design, guiding our decisions every step of the way. The natural palette we curated is visually striking and reflects the ethos of our design philosophy at Taliesyn. When our clients step into the studio, they feel connected with the space, as it mirrors the values that shape our design approach.

Our material palette often leans toward natural elements like wood, stone, and earthy tones. We aim to create a connection to nature, designing spaces that feel grounded, harmonious, and timeless.

Looking ahead to 2025, what emerging materials, technologies, or design philosophies do you anticipate will dominate mood boards? How are factors like biophilic design, smart home integration, and climate-responsive architecture influencing your conceptual process?

In 2025, design will prioritise a deeper connection to nature, with sustainability as the driving force. Natural materials will take centre stage, while climate-responsive architecture adapts to environmental conditions, reducing energy consumption. Biophilic design will remain vital, fostering well-being by integrating natural light, plants, and organic shapes. Smart home technology will enhance daily life by optimising resources and making spaces more efficient and sustainable. Contextual design will be key, ensuring spaces reflect their cultural and geographical environments, creating authentic, meaningful connections. The focus will be on mindful resource use, integrating technology and nature, and creating spaces that promote health, comfort, and environmental stewardship.

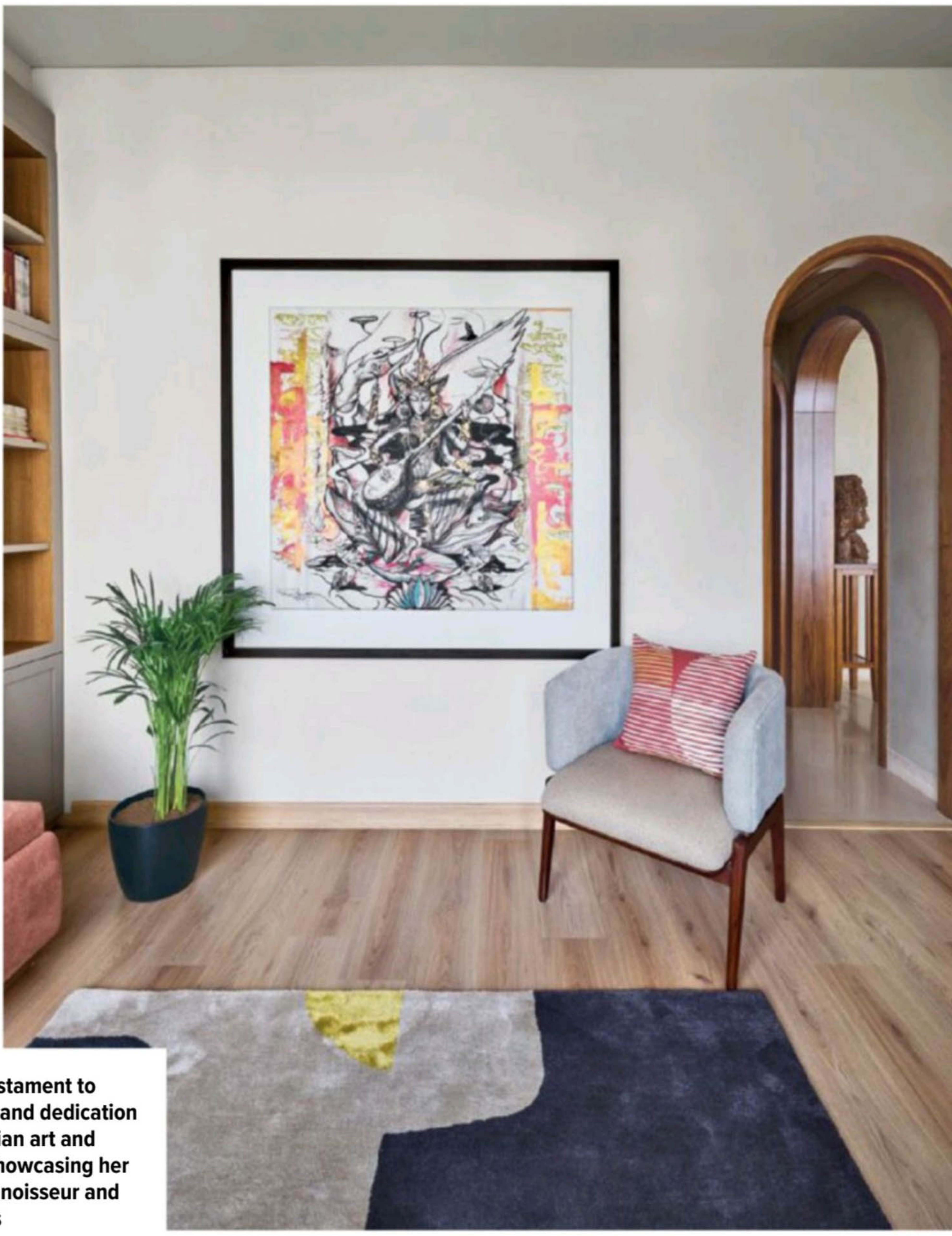
IN SYNC WITH TRADITION

PROJECT: Advaita, Gurugram; **ARCHITECTS:** Envisage Architecture and Interior Design; **PHOTOGRAPHS:** Ashish Sahi

Rooted in tradition, yet refined for modern living, this serene minimalist home masterfully blends the warmth of heritage with the elegance of restraint

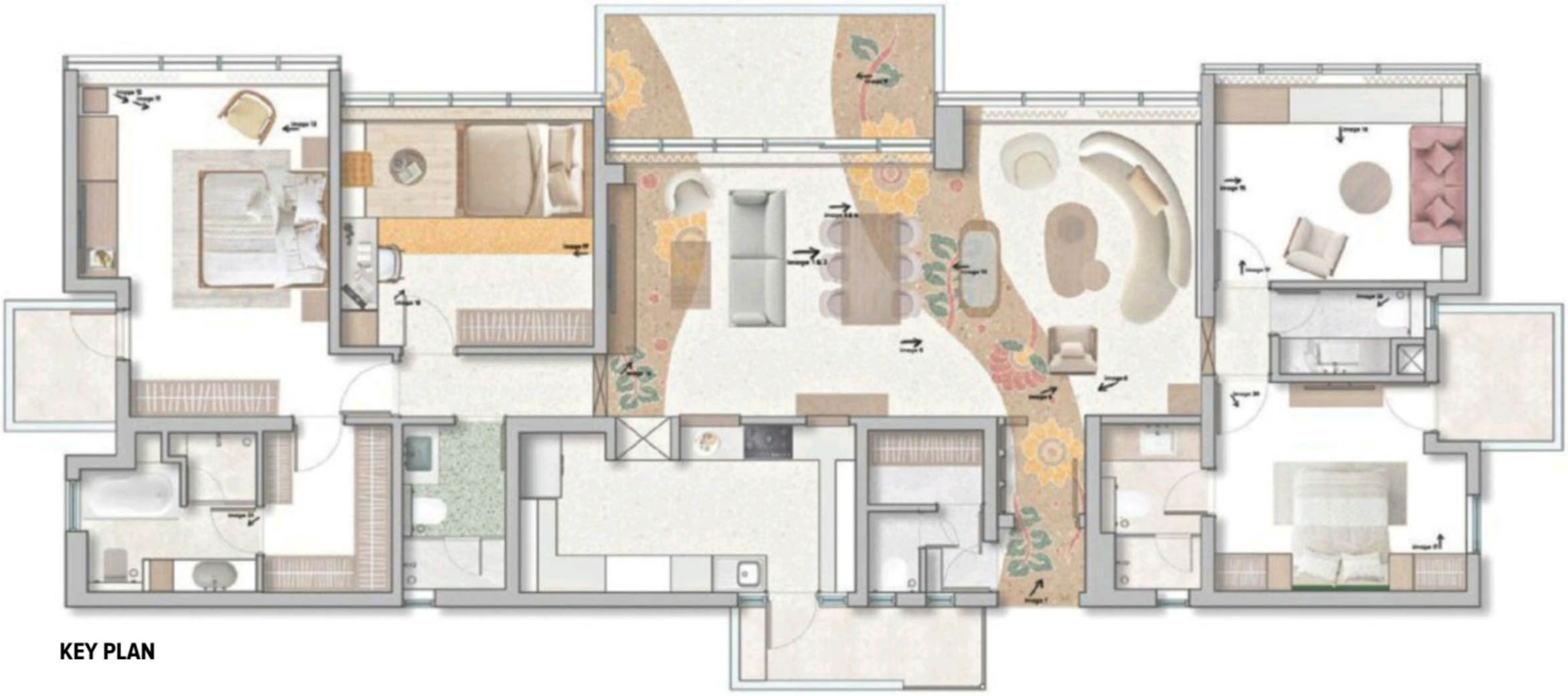
Text by: Seema Sreedharan

The living room's pièce de résistance is a stunning commissioned Gond painting by the acclaimed artist Sri Venkat Raman Shyam. Adding another layer of uniqueness, the flooring features an intricate, hand-drawn design that was carefully crafted on-site by skilled artisans



This home is a testament to Meena's passion and dedication to promoting Indian art and craftsmanship, showcasing her role as a true connoisseur and patron of the arts

> “This home is designed to celebrate nature and evolution, and also to find beauty in the irregularities of the handmade. It’s an ode to the creativity that spans the length and breadth of our nation”
> —**MEENA MURTHY KAKKAR**, *Design Head & Partner, Envisage*



KEY PLAN

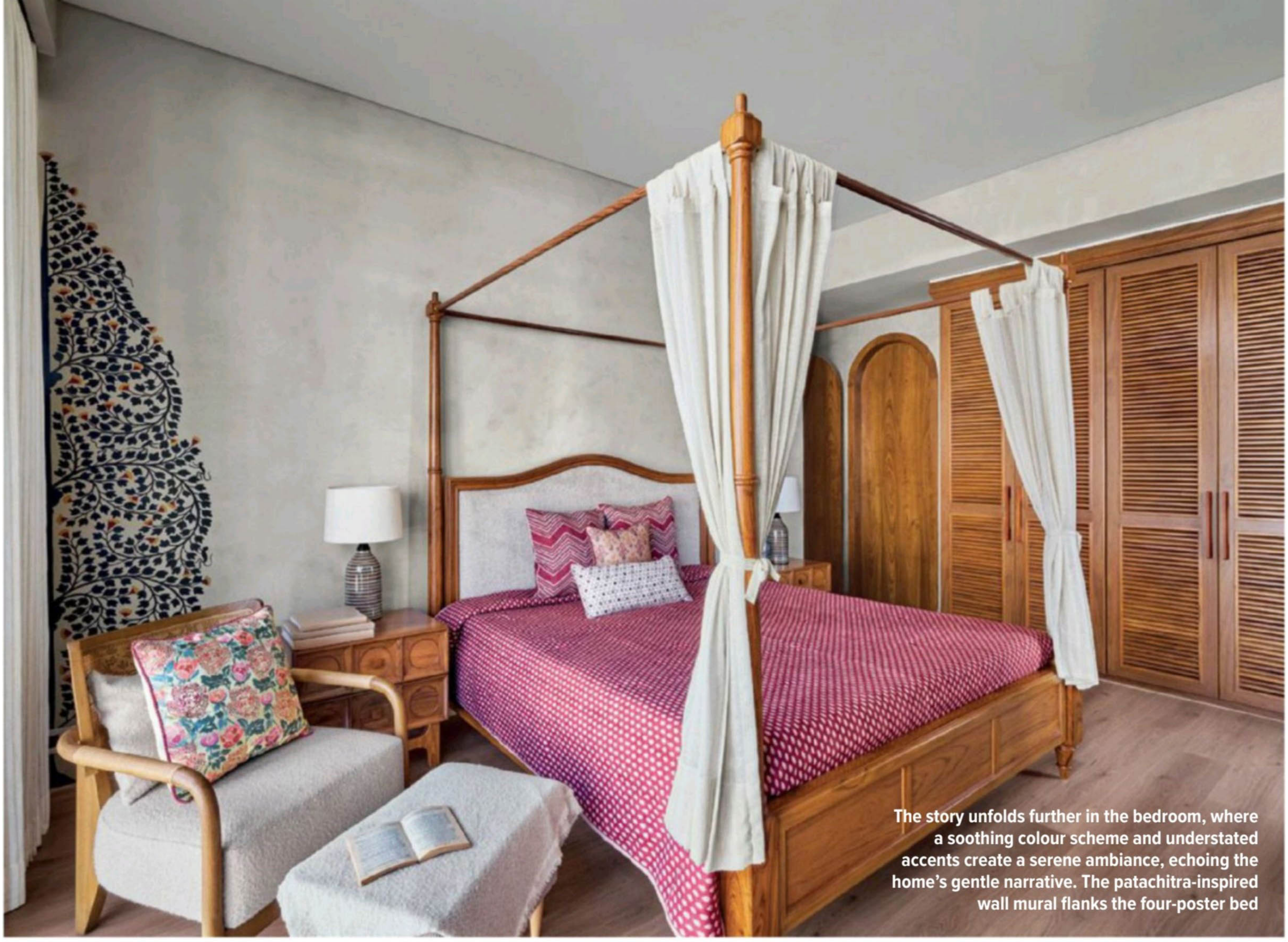
“A skyscraper has perfect geometry. A tall tree, on the other hand, doesn’t. An engineered bridge has perfect composition, but somewhere the meandering river that flows under it doesn’t. I think we humans seek perfection, order, symmetry and geometry, and somewhere this question has become even more pronounced in the current times. Yet, when it all gets too much and overwhelms us, we seek the imperfection of nature to calm us. I think a world where we embrace emotions and ageing, and where we celebrate our individual differences is truly the world that spells happiness,” elucidates architect Meena Murthy Kakkar of Envisage, as she talks about her new project, Advaita, a wabi-sabi home where imperfections define the luxury of free expression and the artist’s emotion; a home that celebrates Indian art and form, in a contemporary context.

INDIA MODERN

The home is the definition of the India Modern aesthetic. When we think Indian, we equate it to a cornucopia of colours, patterns and textures. For most of us, recreating an Indian aesthetic would mean creating a maximalist space. But Meena handles this aesthetic with delicate hands. The walls, painted in a limewash finish, provide an excellent canvas for art and artefacts that dot the house. “This home is designed to celebrate nature and evolution, and also to find beauty in the irregularities of the handmade,” explains the architect. “It’s an ode to the creativity that spans the length and breadth of our nation.” Like a gallery, the space urges you to meander and examine each of its pieces; at the same time, it brings together a compelling narrative that respects its roots, context and tradition.

WELCOME TO ADVAITA

Meena refers to her residence as ‘Advaita’, a name that reflects her deep connection to the space. The entrance passage has a wall with pieces from all four corners of India adorning its niches. A beautiful vintage yali sits over a 200-year-old Chettinad pillar, paying obeisance to our traditional crafts. The floor showcases a stunning zero-waste, cast-in-situ terrazzo surface, featuring two striking bands of design inspired by the timeless beauty of Kalamkari motifs. This modern, handcrafted interpretation of a traditional design element adds a touch of elegance and sophistication to the space. A commissioned

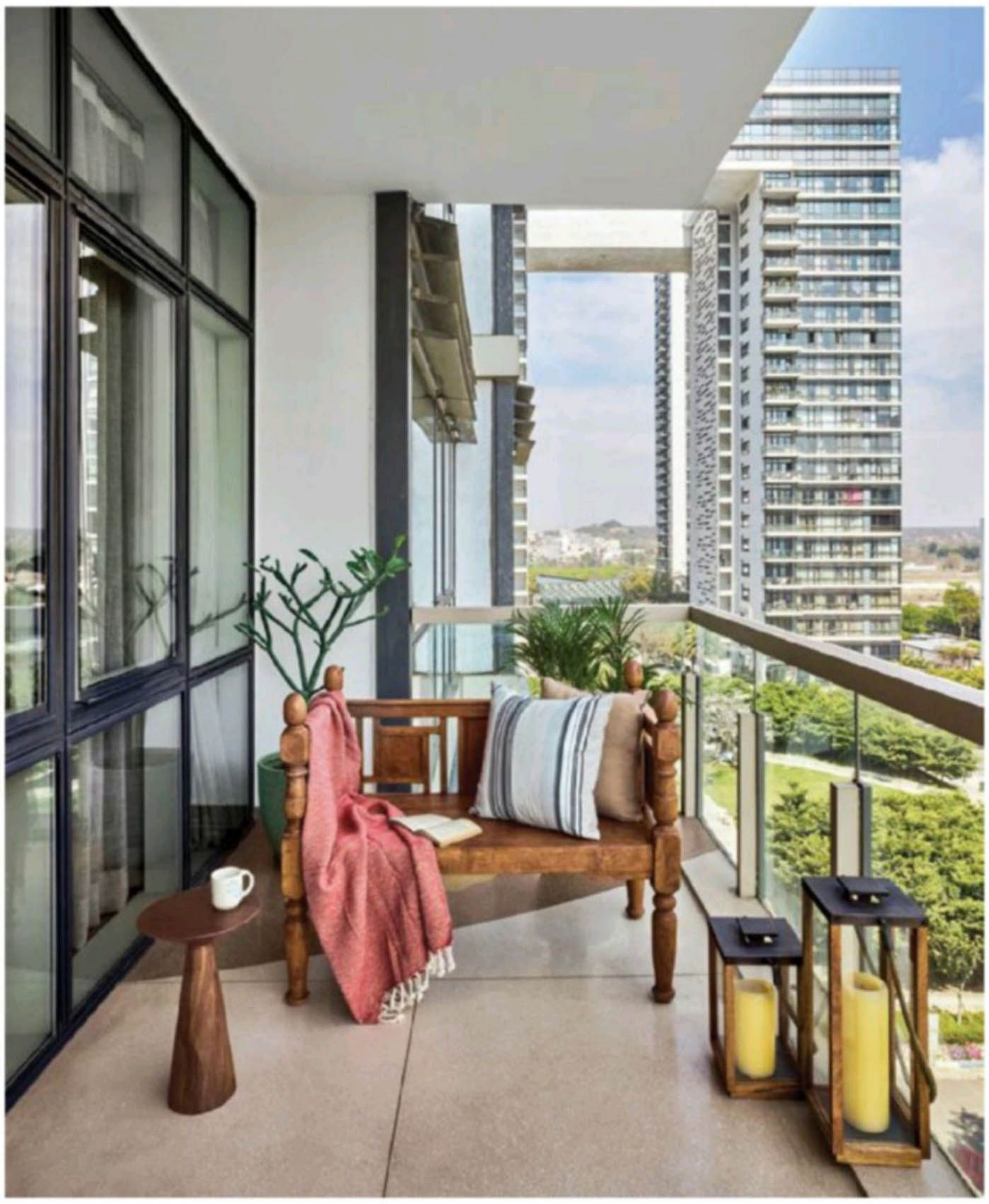


The story unfolds further in the bedroom, where a soothing colour scheme and understated accents create a serene ambiance, echoing the home's gentle narrative. The patachitra-inspired wall mural flanks the four-poster bed

MEENA MURTHY KAKKAR

Design Head & Partner, Envisage

Meena Murthy Kakkar is the Design Head at Envisage, an Interior and Architecture firm specializing in Design and Build projects. Meena pursued a Bachelor of Architecture from the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi, after which she started her design quest as a Partner at Envisage, along with Vishal Kakkar. Sharing her incredible knowledge with the young aspirants, she has also been teaching Design at SPA, Delhi since 2008. With her 19 years of design experience, Meena has paved a glorious path for a practice that is embedded with robust design principles and provides comprehensive solutions for all requirements.



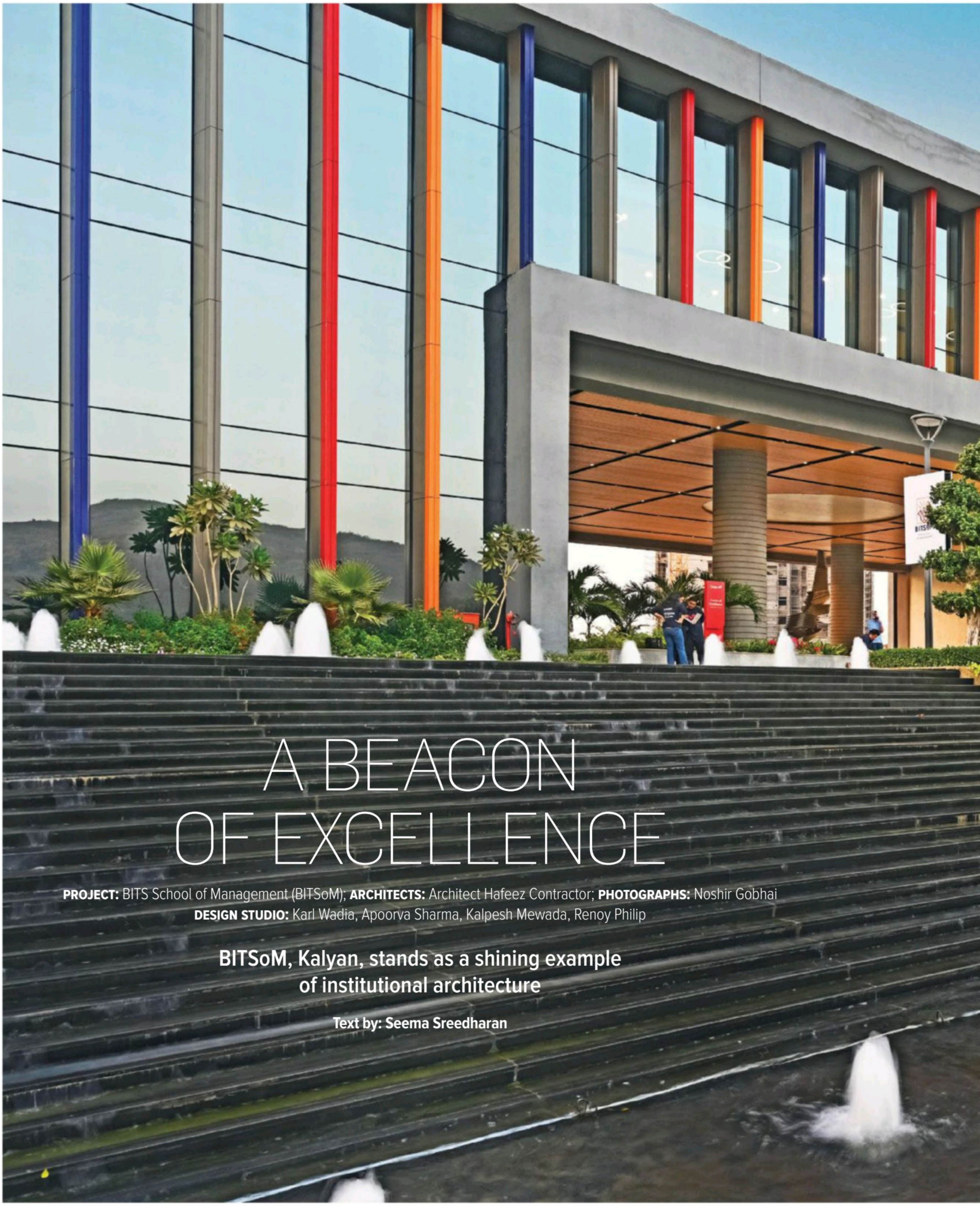
Connect with thyself

The true beauty of this home lies in its thoughtful curation, striking a perfect balance between restraint and elegance. Every accessory and accent has been carefully chosen to create a harmonious whole

> "It is our constant endeavour to make traditional art and craft a part of mainstream design stories. It is necessary to do that to essentially keep these arts and crafts relevant in the eyes of the public. The crafts are an important thread in the weave of our cultural continuity, and they need to be preserved."
> —**MEENA MURTHY KAKKAR**, *Design Head & Partner, Envisage*

Gond painting by celebrated artist, Sri Venkat Raman Shyam, takes centre stage in the living room. A beautifully crafted reclaimed window from Jaipur serves as a backdrop for a thoughtful vignette. Black clay pottery from the Khasi hills of Meghalaya adds an earthy, organic touch, while a stunning sketch of Saraswati by artist Prasun Mazumdar holds the pride of place in the puja room. This poignant artwork depicts Saraswati emerging from the depths of destruction, submerged in water, yet creating the first notes of music after Prahlad's tumultuous era. Meanwhile, Brahma looks on, poised to recreate the earth anew. This powerful scene invites contemplation, creativity and connection, making this space a perfect haven for meditation, study or musical pursuits. "Art somewhere brings inner peace while one is surrounded by chaos, and that is what this painting is all about," reflects Meena. The master bedroom has a patachitra-inspired mural, flanking the carved four-poster bed. The muted wabi-sabi interiors act as the perfect foil, the perfect background to allow all these beautiful pieces to shine through. In this space, thoughtfully designed and curated by Meena, every detail is a testament to her unwavering passion for the arts. A true patron of the arts, Meena's commitment to her craft is evident in every carefully curated piece, every brushstroke, and every nuanced design element. This home is indeed an art lover's paradise—a masterpiece that celebrates the beauty, diversity and transformative power of art.

"At Envisage, it is our constant endeavour to make traditional art and craft a part of mainstream design stories. It is necessary to do that to essentially keep these arts and crafts relevant in the eyes of the public. The crafts are an important thread in the weave of our cultural continuity, and they need to be preserved," concludes Meena. ✚

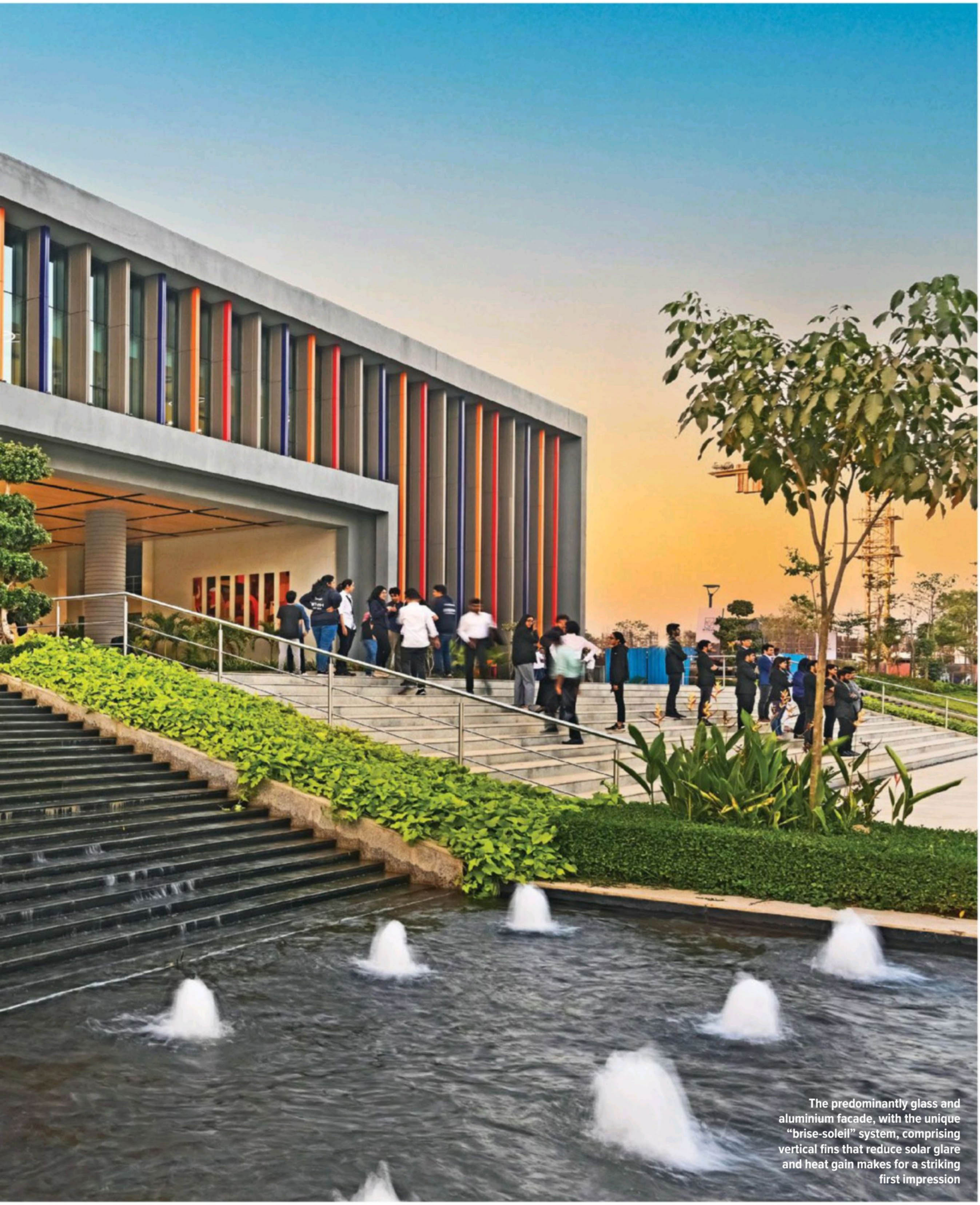


A BEACON OF EXCELLENCE

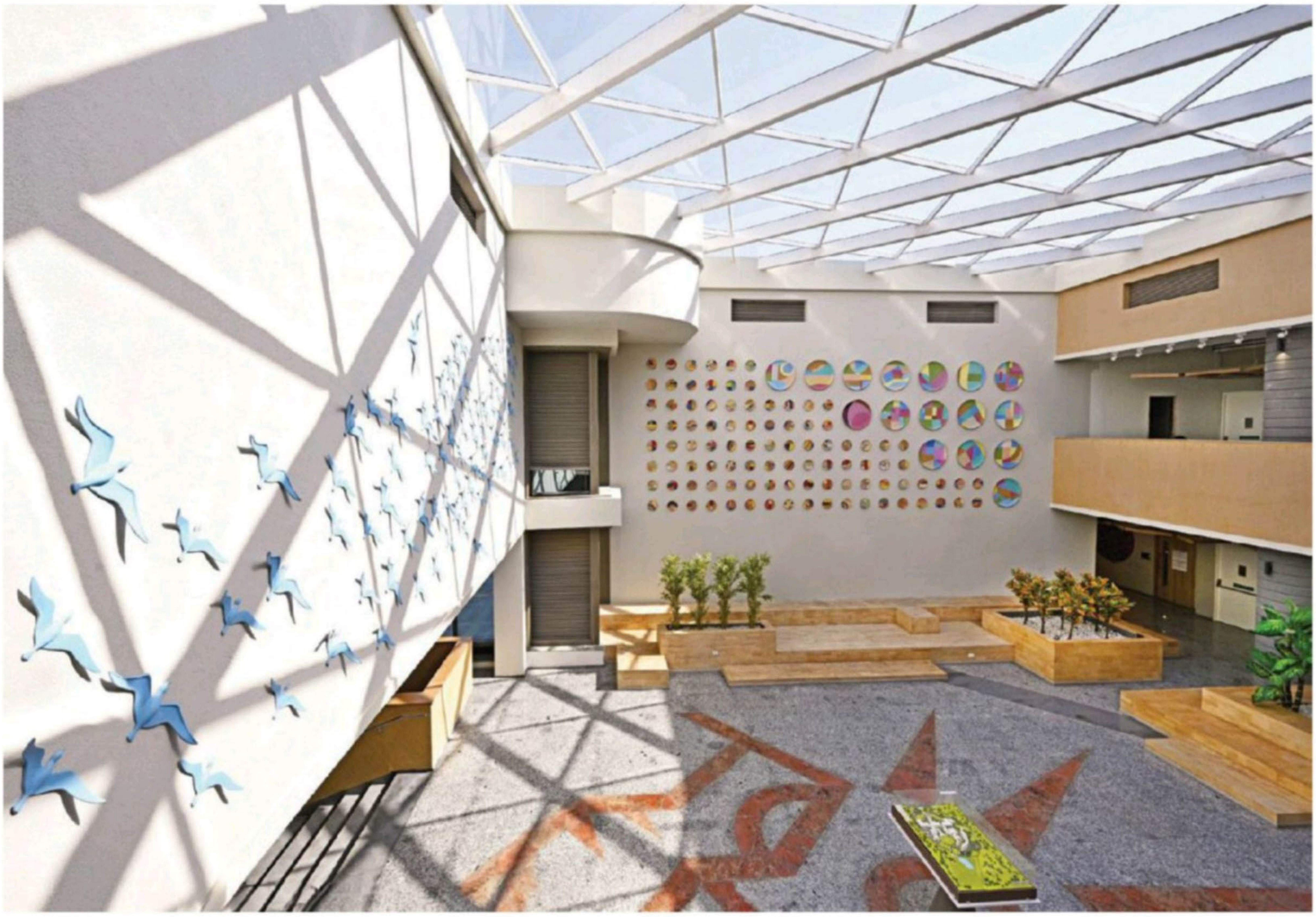
PROJECT: BITS School of Management (BITSoM); **ARCHITECTS:** Architect Hafeez Contractor; **PHOTOGRAPHS:** Noshir Gobhai
DESIGN STUDIO: Karl Wadia, Apoorva Sharma, Kalpesh Mewada, Renoy Philip

BITSoM, Kalyan, stands as a shining example of institutional architecture

Text by: Seema Sreedharan



The predominantly glass and aluminium facade, with the unique "brise-soleil" system, comprising vertical fins that reduce solar glare and heat gain makes for a striking first impression



> “The project called for a deep understanding of the institution’s heritage and values for us to create a physical space that inspires innovation, fosters collaboration and propels future generations of leaders.”
> —**KARL WADIA**, *Architect Hafeez Contractor*

The architecture of an educational institution is more than just a physical framework—it’s a catalyst for learning, a nurturer of creativity and a shaper of young minds. A well-designed institution can foster a sense of community, spark curiosity and encourage exploration, ultimately setting the stage for a transformative educational experience. As we explore the BITSOM campus in Kalyan designed by Architect Hafeez Contractor, we’ll delve into how its thoughtful design is redefining the educational landscape.

Sprawling across 63 acres of lush greenery, the campus is setting new standards in institutional architecture. The project sets a new standard in interdisciplinary education, fostering collaboration and innovation across multiple fields.

“The project called for a deep understanding of the institution’s heritage and values for us to create a physical space that inspires innovation, fosters collaboration and propels future generations of leaders,” explains Karl Wadia, Architect Hafeez Contractor. Steeped in a legacy of excellence spanning over 120 years.

THE LEGACY

The institute began as a modest *pathshala* in the village of Pilani in 1901 and evolved into a college in 1947—a pivotal year that marked India’s independence. The institute’s trajectory continued to ascend, earning deemed university status in 1964. Its partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) introduced a paradigm shift in India’s technical and scientific education landscape. Today, the institute has expanded to three more campuses—Dubai, Goa and Hyderabad.

In 2020, BITS Pilani was granted the coveted status of an Institution of Eminence by the Govt of India as a recognition of its legacy of excellence, entrepreneurship and leadership. BITSOM, Kalyan is the fifth campus of BITS Pilani.

The architects played a pivotal role in the successful expansion of Pilani, Goa and Hyderabad campuses. Architect Hafeez Contractor and his team, led by Karl Wadia, Apoorva Sharma, Kalpesh Mewada and Renoy Philip were selected to design the new 5000-capacity campus. “BITSOM is the first of five campuses to be designed with multidisciplinary fields of education and collaboration in mind,” informs Wadia.

BITSoM

> "The campus is inspired by the traditional Gurukul concept, fostering a dynamic environment that encourages maximum interaction and collaboration between faculty and students."
> —**KARL WADIA**, *Architect Hafeez Contractor*

INSPIRED BY TRADITION

"The campus is inspired by the traditional Gurukul concept, fostering a dynamic environment that encourages maximum interaction and collaboration between faculty and students," says the architect. The pedestrian-friendly campus is designed with adaptability in mind, incorporating flexible learning spaces that can be easily reconfigured to accommodate various teaching methods and technologies. This approach ensures that the campus remains relevant and effective in the face of rapidly changing educational landscapes.

THE DESIGN LANGUAGE

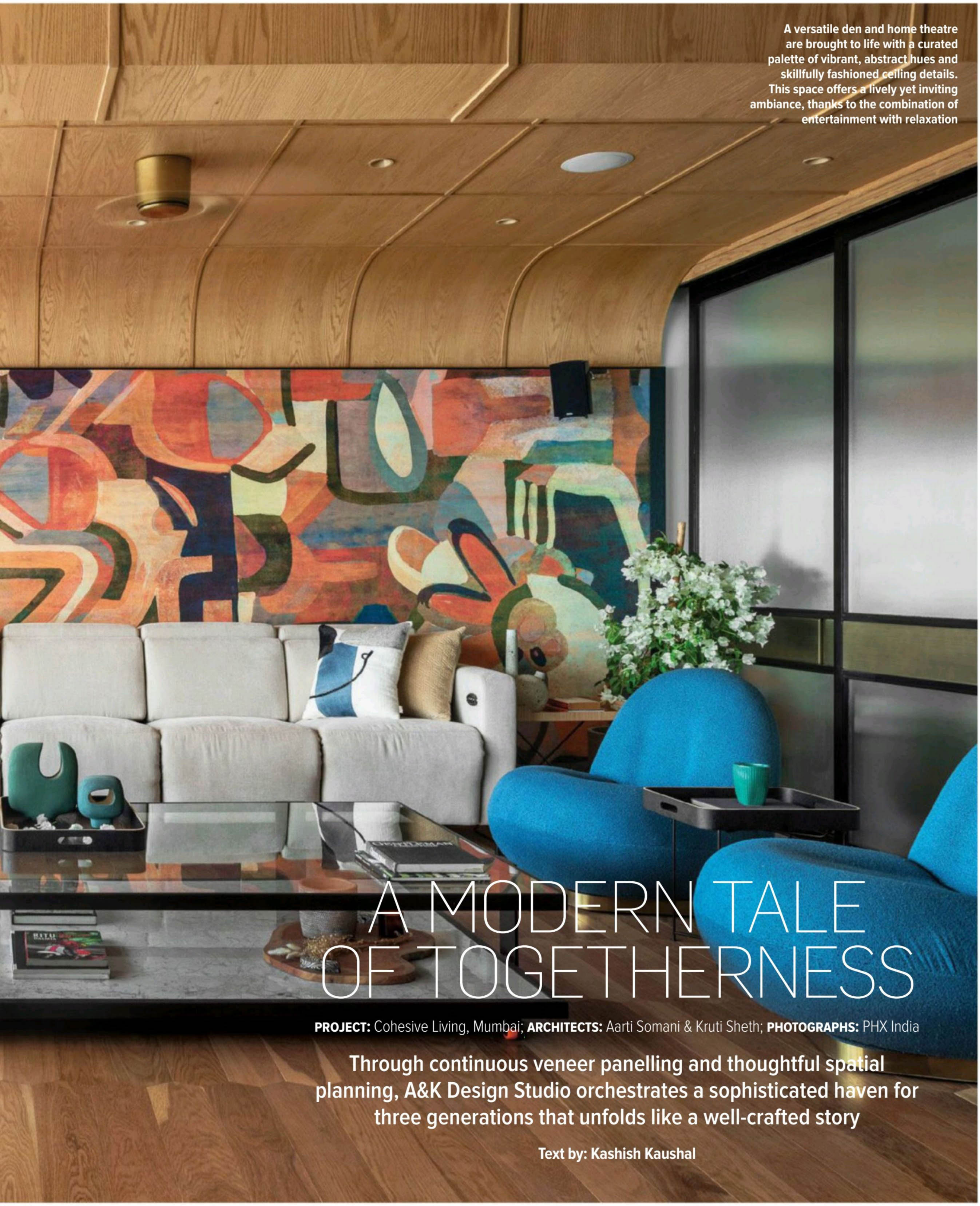
The predominantly glass and aluminium facade, with the unique 'brise-soleil' system, comprising horizontal and vertical fins that reduce solar glare and heat gain, makes for a striking first impression. Set against a lush green backdrop, it offers an interesting contrast. The central plaza comprises shaded steps seating, lawns and interactive spaces with the vibrant colourful façade of the buildings as the backdrop. The faculty and student housing zones are more fluid in nature, arranged around a large sports field that forms a catalyst for faculty and student interaction beyond the classroom space. The northern edge of the campus, lovingly nicknamed 'Prakriti', is designed as a large garden space connected via a pedestrian overpass overlooking the Ulhas River.

THE GREEN QUOTIENT

The design prioritizes sustainability, incorporating eco-friendly features such as green roofs, solar panels and rainwater harvesting systems. The campus's clever use of natural light and ventilation reduces the need for artificial lighting and air-conditioning, creating a healthier and more energy-efficient environment for students and faculty. The project represents a bold new era in education, one that combines tradition with innovation and adaptability with sustainability.

FACT**FILE**

Project: BITS School of Management (BITSoM)
Location: Kalyan, Maharashtra, INDIA
Client: M/s. Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani
Architect: M/s. Architect Hafeez Contractor
Design Studio: Karl Wadia, Apoorva Sharma, Kalpesh Mevada, Renoy Phillip
Consultants: M/s. JW Consultants LLP (Structural), M/s. Pankaj Dharkar & Associates (MEPF), M/s. PS Landscape & Ecology (Landscape), M/s. ANA (Interiors Design)
Commencement Date: Year 2021
Year of Completion Date: 2024 (Phase 1)
Site Area: 60 Acres
Construction Area: 15 lakh sq ft
Discipline: Master Planning & Comprehensive Architectural Design



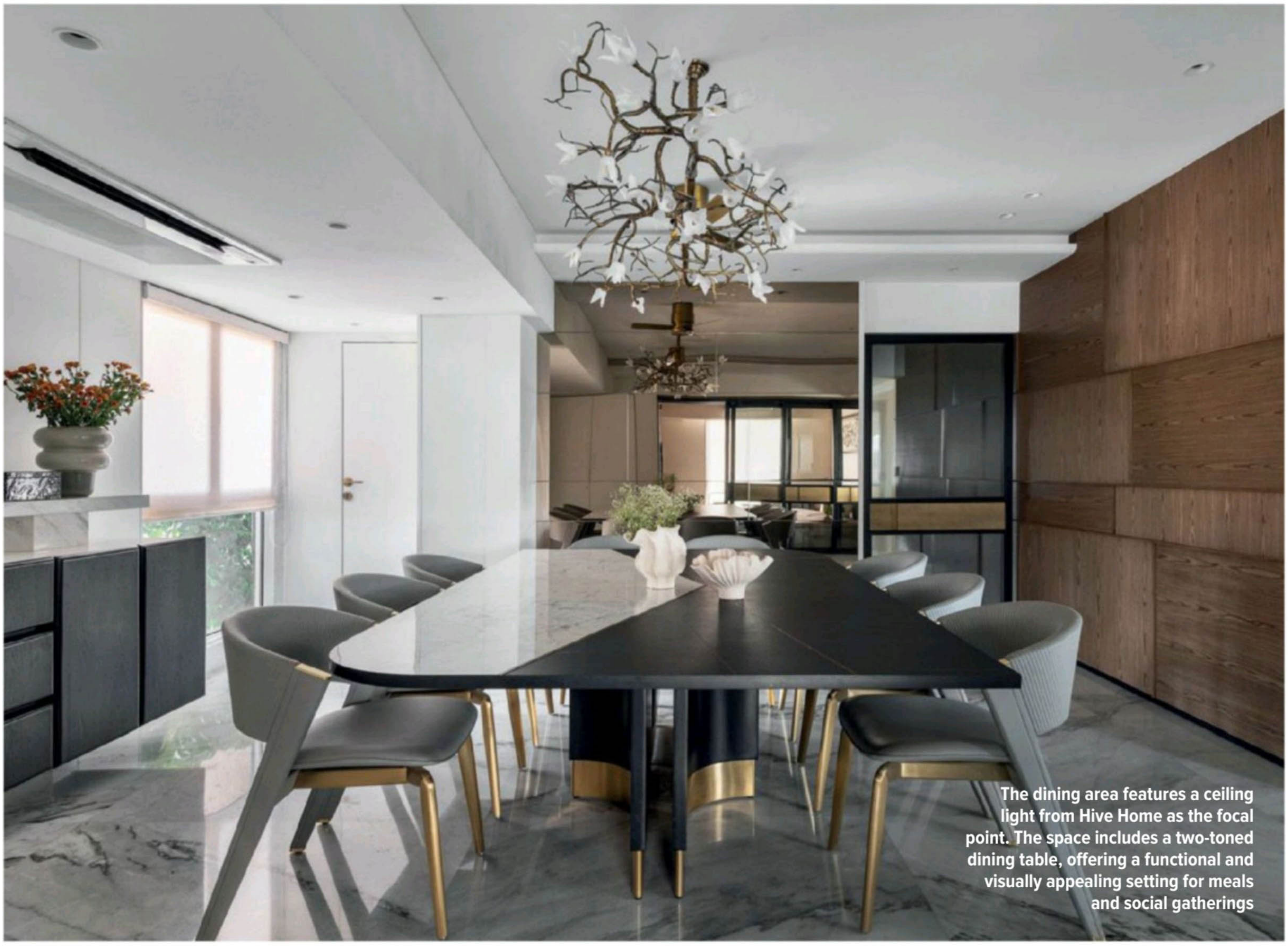
A versatile den and home theatre are brought to life with a curated palette of vibrant, abstract hues and skillfully fashioned ceiling details. This space offers a lively yet inviting ambiance, thanks to the combination of entertainment with relaxation

A MODERN TALE OF TOGETHERNESS

PROJECT: Cohesive Living, Mumbai; **ARCHITECTS:** Aarti Somani & Kruti Sheth; **PHOTOGRAPHS:** PHX India

Through continuous veneer panelling and thoughtful spatial planning, A&K Design Studio orchestrates a sophisticated haven for three generations that unfolds like a well-crafted story

Text by: Kashish Kaushal



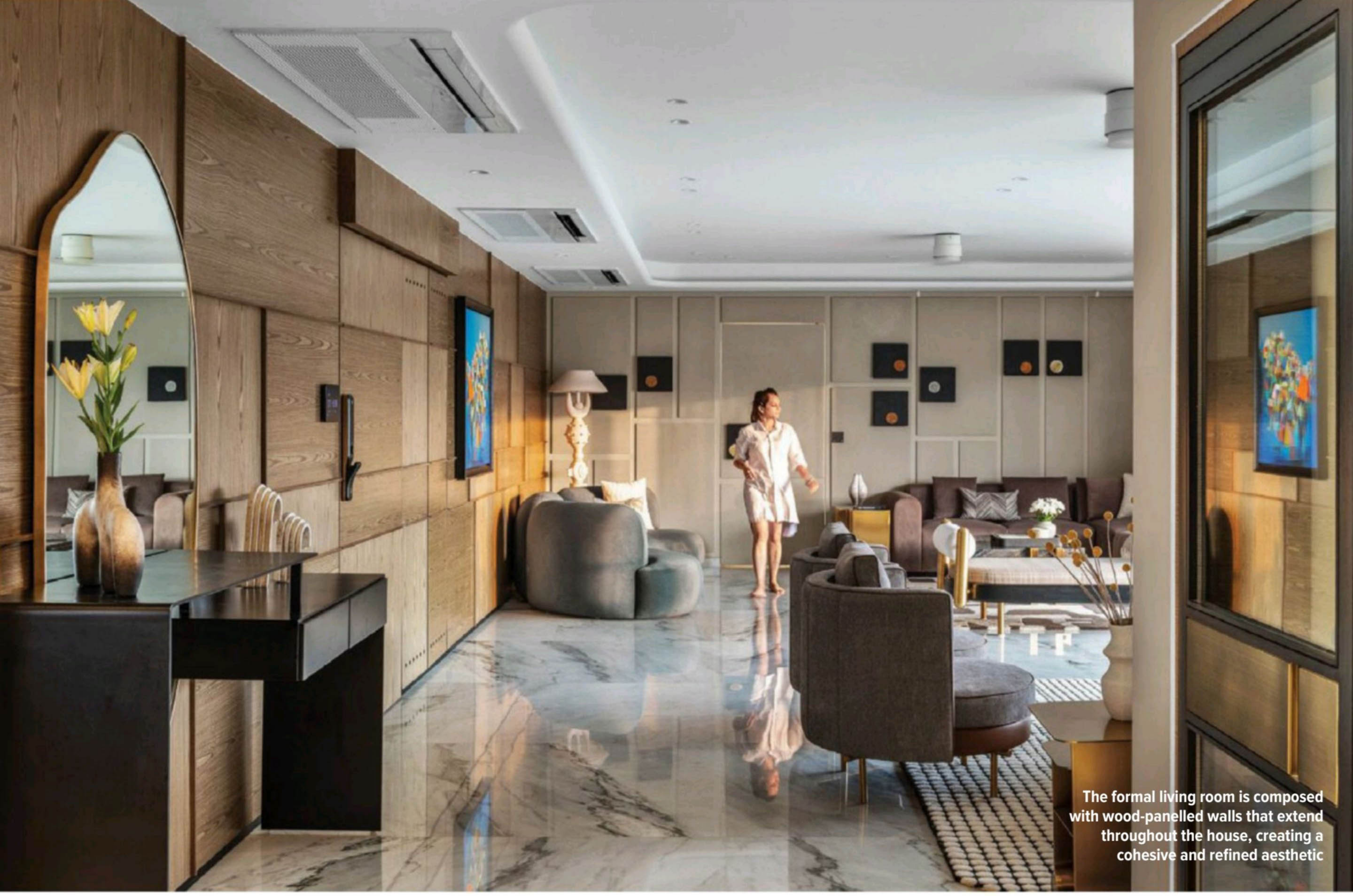
The dining area features a ceiling light from Hive Home as the focal point. The space includes a two-toned dining table, offering a functional and visually appealing setting for meals and social gatherings

> "The client wanted a home that has private sanctuaries for each member—grandparents, parents, and two young children—while cultivating communal spaces that nurture meaningful family interactions."
> —**KRUTI SHETH & AARTI SOMANI**, *Founders & Interior Designers - A&K Design Studio*

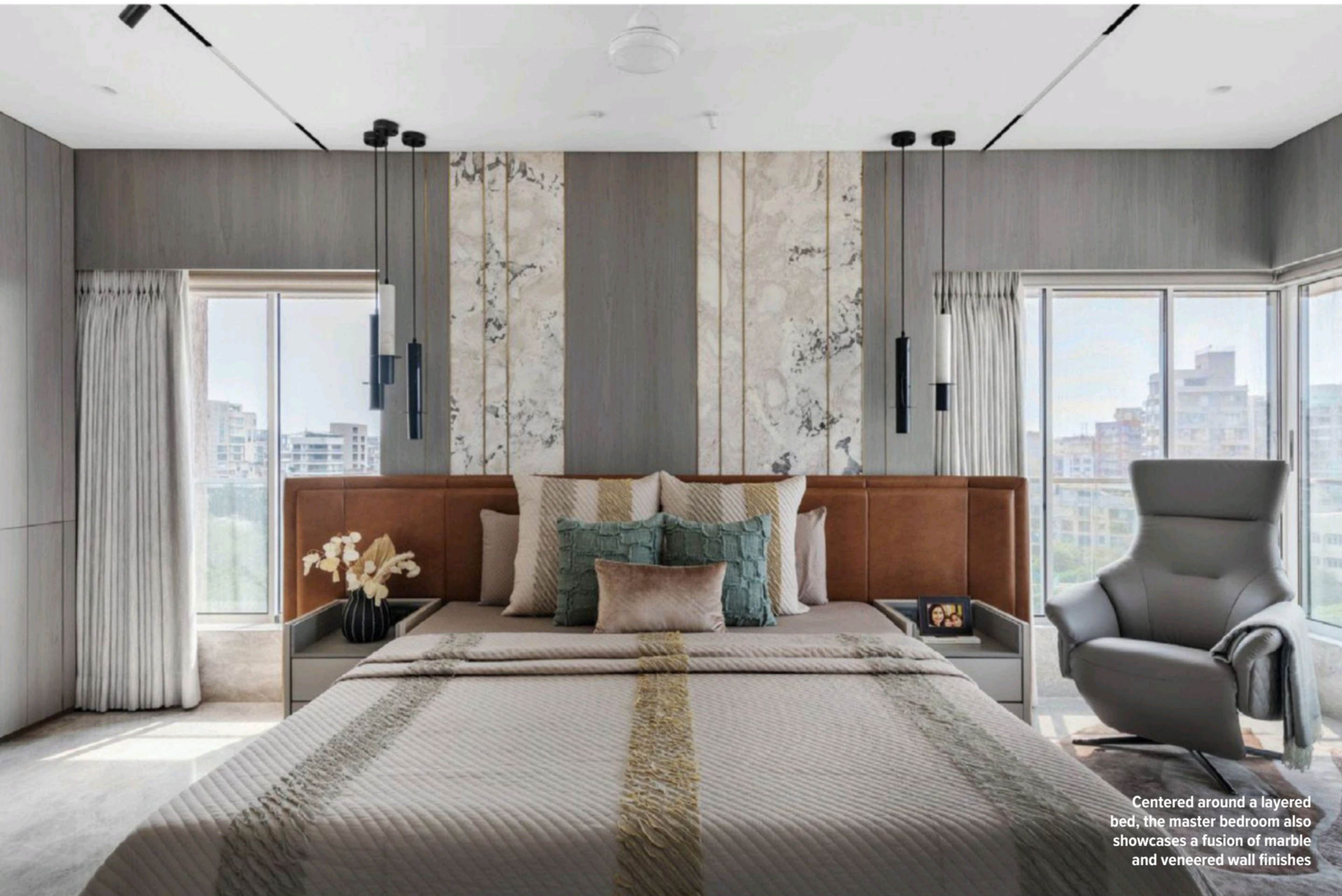
Remember the time when Indian families lived together in sprawling havelis—corridors made of marble and wooden archways witnessed generations growing together, all under one roof? In a luxurious Mumbai high-rise, A&K Design Studio has recreated this timeless feeling of nostalgia in a contemporary avatar. Their 5,000 sq ft creation proves that joint family living can be beautifully composed even within modern apartments. "The client wanted a home that has private sanctuaries for each member—grandparents, parents, and two young children—while cultivating communal spaces that nurture meaningful family interactions," reveal co-founders and interior designers Aarti Somani and Kruti Sheth.

Our ancestors believed that private spaces and shared moments can coexist in perfect harmony. A&K Design Studio celebrated this vision through a thoughtful design language as they crafted distinct sanctuaries for the family, while making sure the communal areas become the podium for daily family shenanigans. "We tailor make projects to the clients' requirements married with our aesthetic sensibilities. This large apartment needed an amalgamation of various features to incorporate different age groups while at the same time making it feel like an entire single unit. We managed to bring in the harmony very well as we usually do for our spaces," further elaborates Aarti.

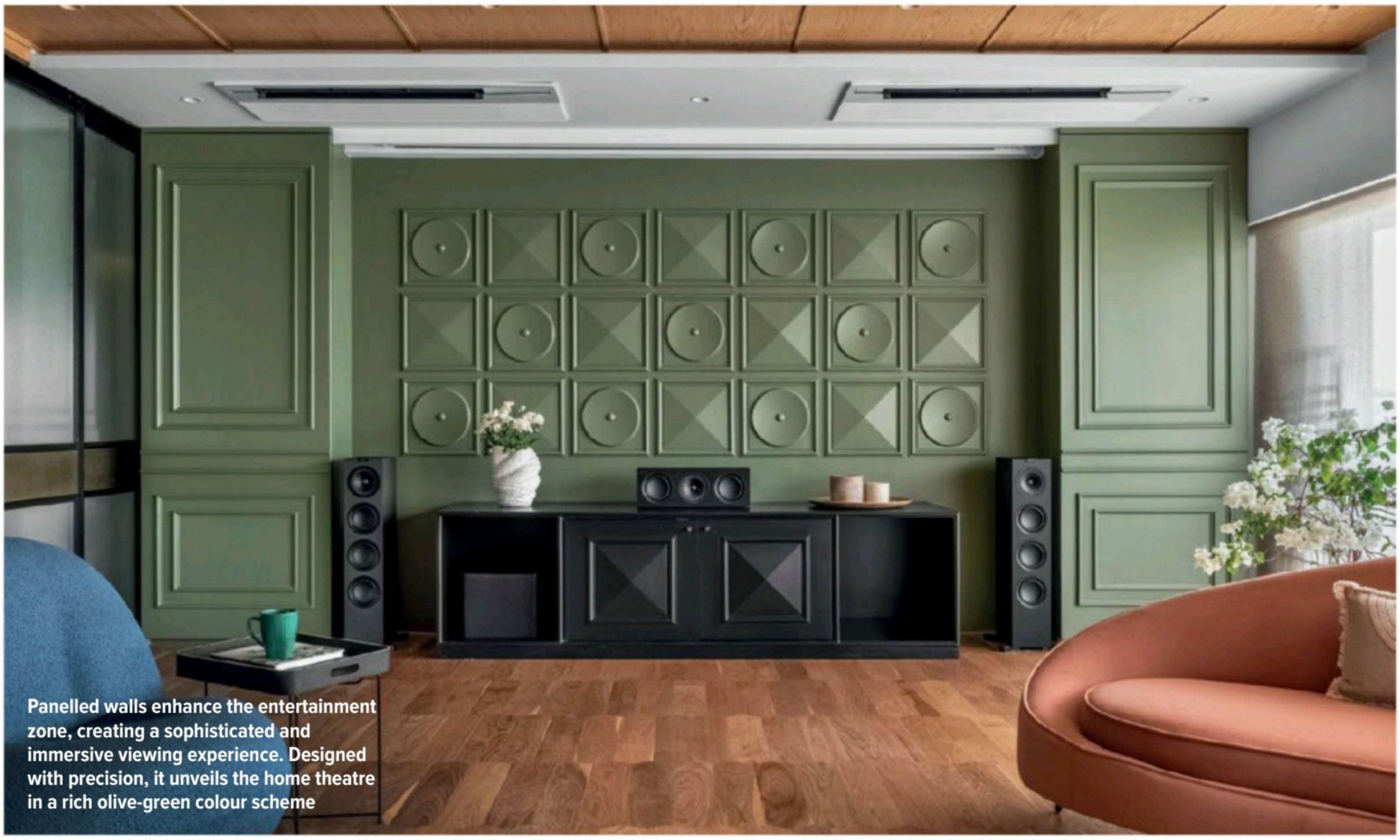
As one enters, the formal living room showcases the designers' sophisticated sensibilities from the get-go. Pristine white marble flooring reflects light throughout the space, creating an airy, elegant atmosphere. This area flows seamlessly into an open-plan dining space, where a dining table in black and white marble operates as both—a visual anchor and the heart of family gatherings. No prizes for guessing, the most cherished space in the home is the TV room, accessible through a sliding door adjacent to the living area. Here, warm wooden flooring and a matching ceiling forge an inviting cocoon for family entertainment.



The formal living room is composed with wood-panelled walls that extend throughout the house, creating a cohesive and refined aesthetic



Centered around a layered bed, the master bedroom also showcases a fusion of marble and veneered wall finishes

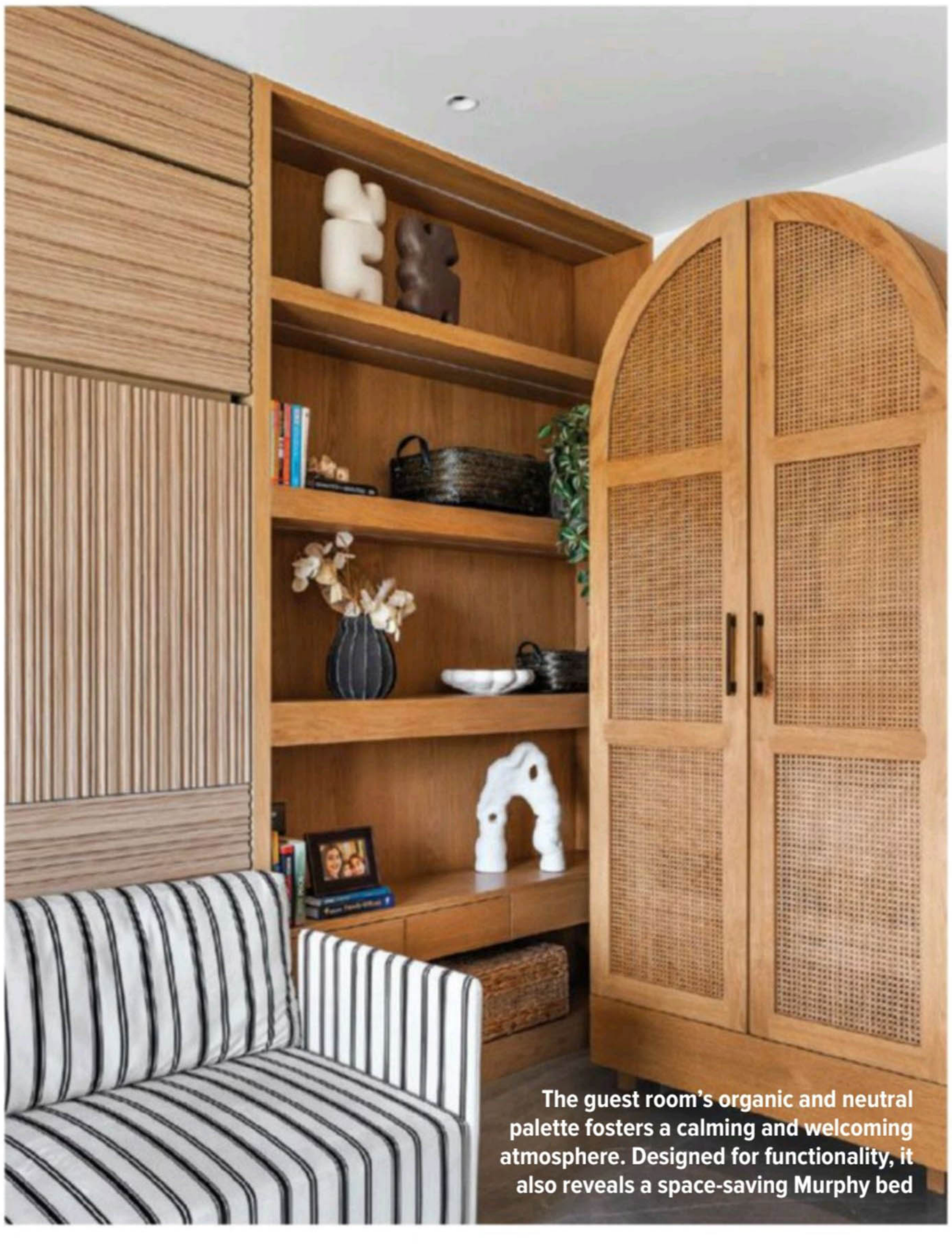


Panelled walls enhance the entertainment zone, creating a sophisticated and immersive viewing experience. Designed with precision, it unveils the home theatre in a rich olive-green colour scheme

KRUTI SHETH & AARTI SOMANI

Founders & Interior Designers, A&K Design Studio

A&K Design Studio is a design firm dedicated to crafting spaces that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing. Their unique approach seamlessly blends contemporary design aesthetics with a deep understanding of their clients' individual needs and personalities, resulting in interiors that exude warmth and timelesselegance. Since its inception, A&K Design Studio has consistently delivered projects that exemplify the founders' unwavering commitment to excellence. The firm's portfolio is a testament to their ability to balance creative design with practical considerations, resulting in spaces that are not only visually stunning but also highly livable.



The guest room's organic and neutral palette fosters a calming and welcoming atmosphere. Designed for functionality, it also reveals a space-saving Murphy bed

For the entrepreneurial lady of the house, a dedicated home office combines functionality with elegance, integrating professional and personal spheres

> "We tailor make projects to the clients' requirements married with our aesthetic sensibilities. This large apartment needed an amalgamation of various features to incorporate different age groups while at the same time making it feel like an entire single unit. We managed to bring in the harmony very well as we usually do for our spaces."
> —**KRUTI SHETH & AARTI SOMANI**, *Founders & Interior Designers – A&K Design Studio*

The space is equipped with a home theatre system and reclining seats, while a vibrant art mural adds personality to this communal retreat. It's this room that Aarti and Kruti particularly enjoyed designing. "The colours and prints along with the use of the wooden elements added a unique touch to the space," quips Kruti, also noting how its quirky vibe and youthful energy provided creative freedom to experiment.

A judicious design strategy has been implemented in all the bedrooms. The master suite features innovative veneer panelling that camouflages abundant storage. A walk-in closet and connected bathroom transform it into a luxury sanctuary. The children's bedrooms weave their own stories through personalised colour schemes and a world map mural that documents family travels, while the parents' bedroom achieves tranquility through a scalloped wall design that conceals the wardrobes. The spa-like bathroom furnished with a jacuzzi, and separate shower cubicles seals the deal.

Understanding modern family dynamics, Aarti and Kruti also incorporated a home office for the lady of the house, enabling a sense of work-life balance. A multifaceted guest room doubles as a wellness space, equipped with a collapsible bed and designated areas for massage and therapy. The puja room, bathed in light marbles and warm veneers, provides a sacred space for the family to worship together. However, the hallmark of this apartment lies in its continuous veneer panelling. Designed in a fascinating 'C' pattern, it weaves through the home, creating visual and thematic unity.

The success of this project lies in its beautiful marriage of tradition and modernity. Through careful zoning, thoughtful material selection, and innovative storage solutions, A&K Design Studios have created a home that endorses Indian cultural values while embracing modern opulence. Like the havelis of yesteryear, this residence illustrates how families can grow together in modern spaces—proving that in the right hands, even vertical homes can hold the warmth of traditional family living. ✚

The foyer elegantly captures the homeowner's essence through its blend of soft, curvilinear forms and a soothing neutral palette. A circular niche and a sculptural center table provide visual intrigue, seamlessly linking the entrance to the surrounding spaces. With its refined details and warm accents, this design establishes a welcoming tone for the home, embodying an inviting and thoughtfully curated ambiance

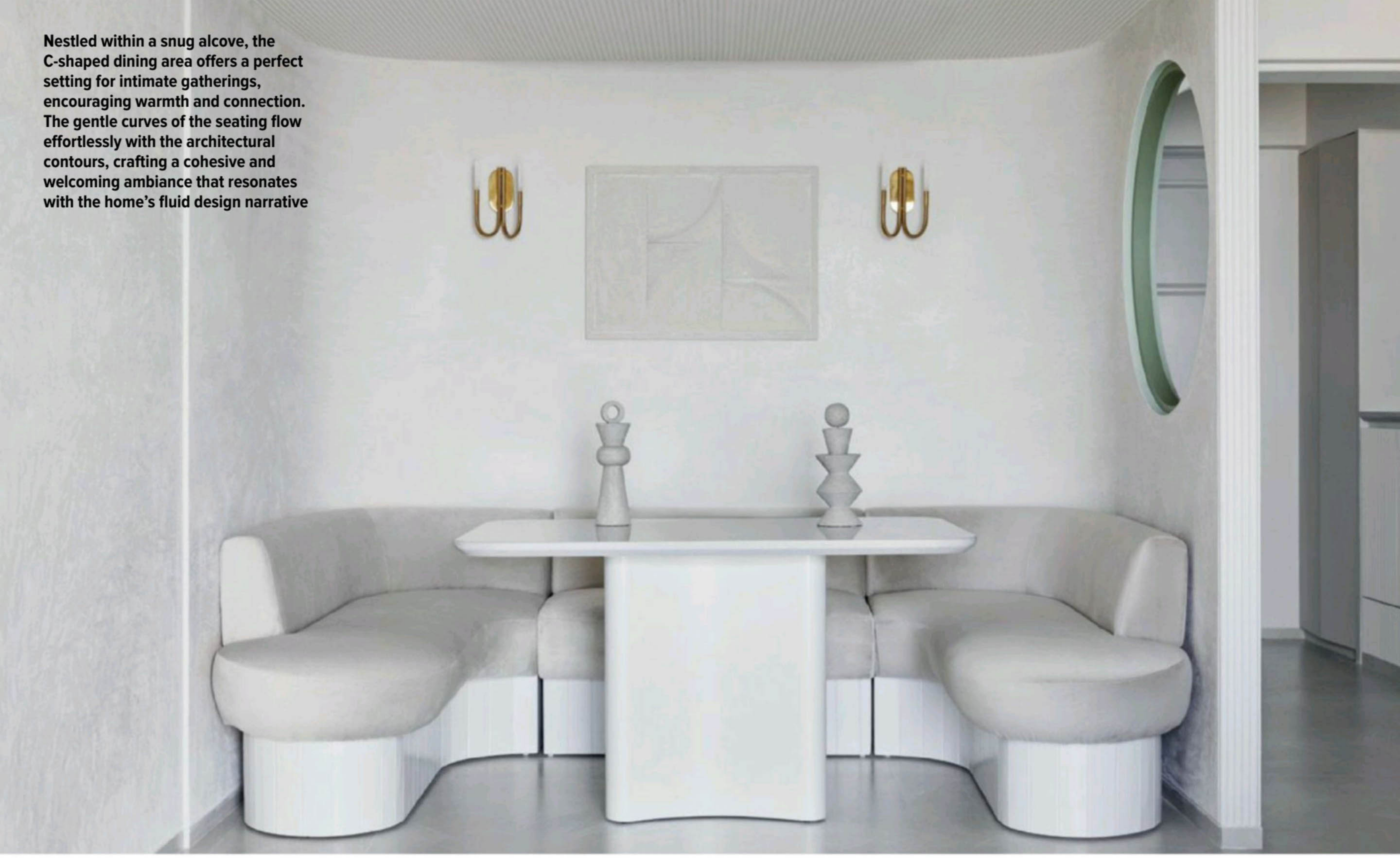
The living space is brought to life with a soothing gradient green palette, enhanced by the fluted and curved wall design that adds depth and texture. Custom-crafted furniture, upholstered in linen and woven fabrics, echoes the gentle curves, fostering a sense of harmony and warmth throughout the room

SOFT EDGES, SHARP DESIGN

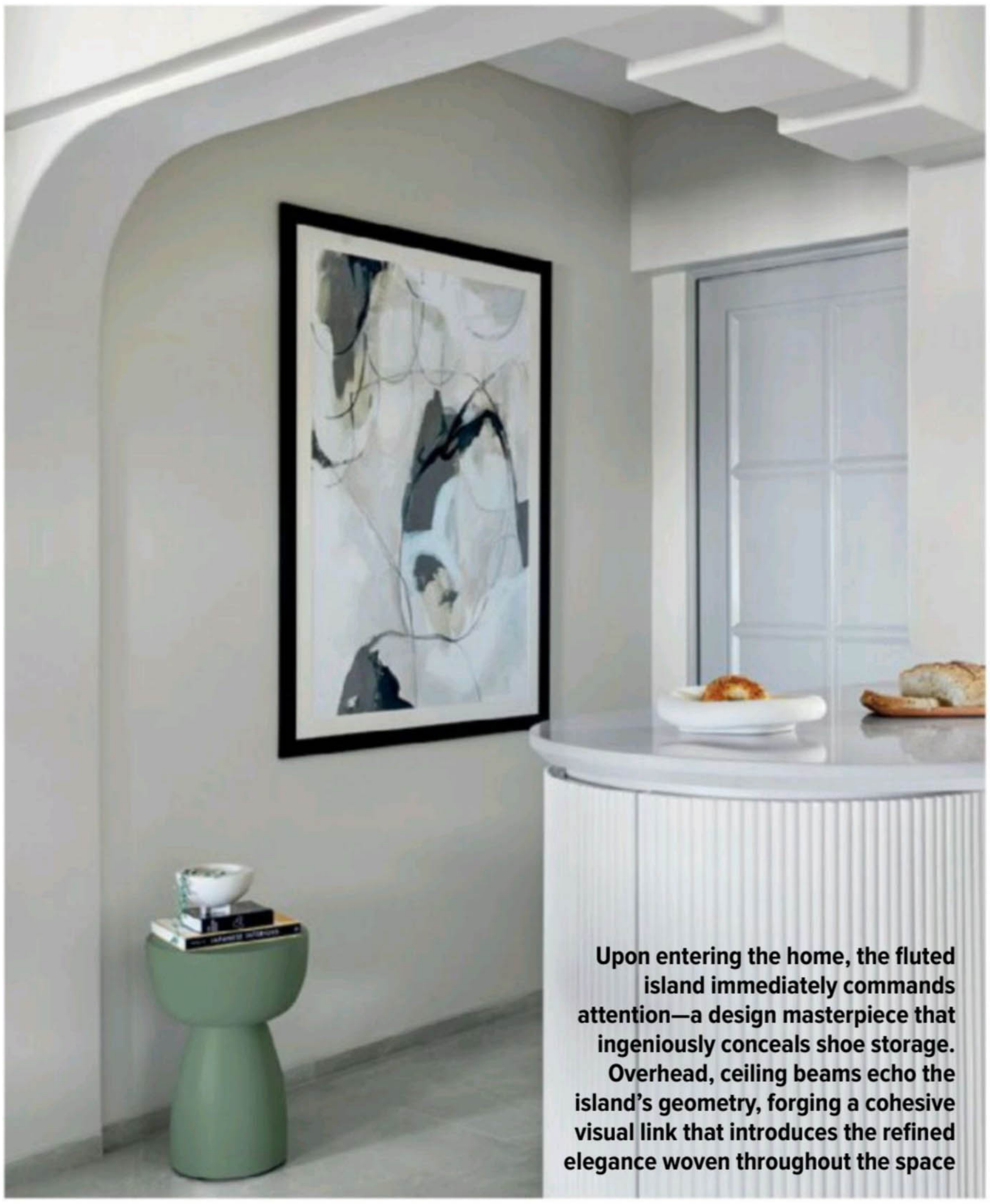
PROJECT: Sunlit Sanctuary, Mumbai; **ARCHITECTS:** Etica Design; **PHOTOGRAPHS:** Talib Chitalwala

Nestled in the heart of Mumbai, Sunlit Sanctuary by Janak Rajpal, Creative Director of Etica Design, is a sublime residence where sunlight takes center stage, shaping a serene and sophisticated narrative

Text by: Kashish Kaushal



Nestled within a snug alcove, the C-shaped dining area offers a perfect setting for intimate gatherings, encouraging warmth and connection. The gentle curves of the seating flow effortlessly with the architectural contours, crafting a cohesive and welcoming ambiance that resonates with the home's fluid design narrative



Upon entering the home, the fluted island immediately commands attention—a design masterpiece that ingeniously conceals shoe storage. Overhead, ceiling beams echo the island's geometry, forging a cohesive visual link that introduces the refined elegance woven throughout the space

JANAK RAJPAL

Creative Director, Etica Design

Janak Rajpal's design philosophy is deeply rooted in his early connection to art and a relentless pursuit of creativity. A graduate of the prestigious Istituto Europeo di Design in Milan, Janak seamlessly blends his artistic intuition with a sharp understanding of form and functionality. As the visionary of Etica, he curates interiors that evoke emotion and individuality, crafting spaces that feel deeply personal yet universally inspiring. Known for his bespoke creations and sculptural elegance, Janak's work reimagines interiors as living art, where every detail is a reflection of thoughtful design and quiet sophistication.

Soft beige and grey tones, paired with textured walls and luxurious fabrics, create a serene ambiance in the master bedroom. The graceful curves along the walls elegantly conceal architectural beams and columns

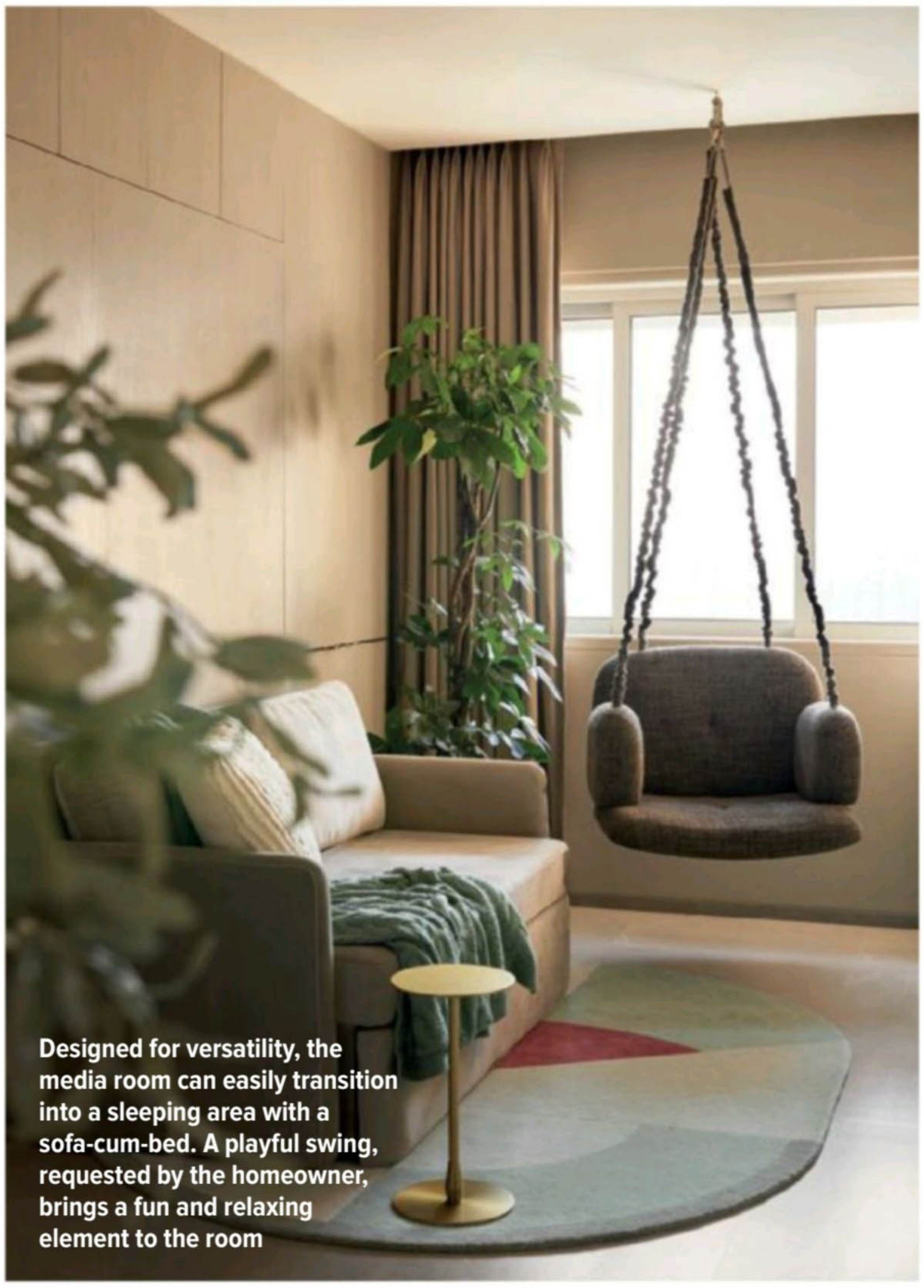
> "I wanted it to exude warmth and sophistication from the moment you step through the door. It was immensely satisfying to craft a space that not only greets guests with style and elegance but also reflects the homeowner's personality and lifestyle."
>
> —**JANAK RAJPAL**, *Creative Director, Etica Design*

In the heart of Mumbai, where every square foot is a precious commodity, lies a 1000-square-foot residence that defies spatial limitations. Designed by Janak Rajpal, Creative Director of Etica Design, this apartment transcends its compact footprint, showcasing how thoughtful design can transform limitations into opportunities and elevate everyday living into a refined art. The narrative of Sunlit Sanctuary begins with light—a protagonist that sculpts and breathes life into every corner. For Etica Design, a Mumbai-based practice that shapes spaces blending artistry with purpose, this home is more than a project—it's a dialogue between bold design and subtle elegance.

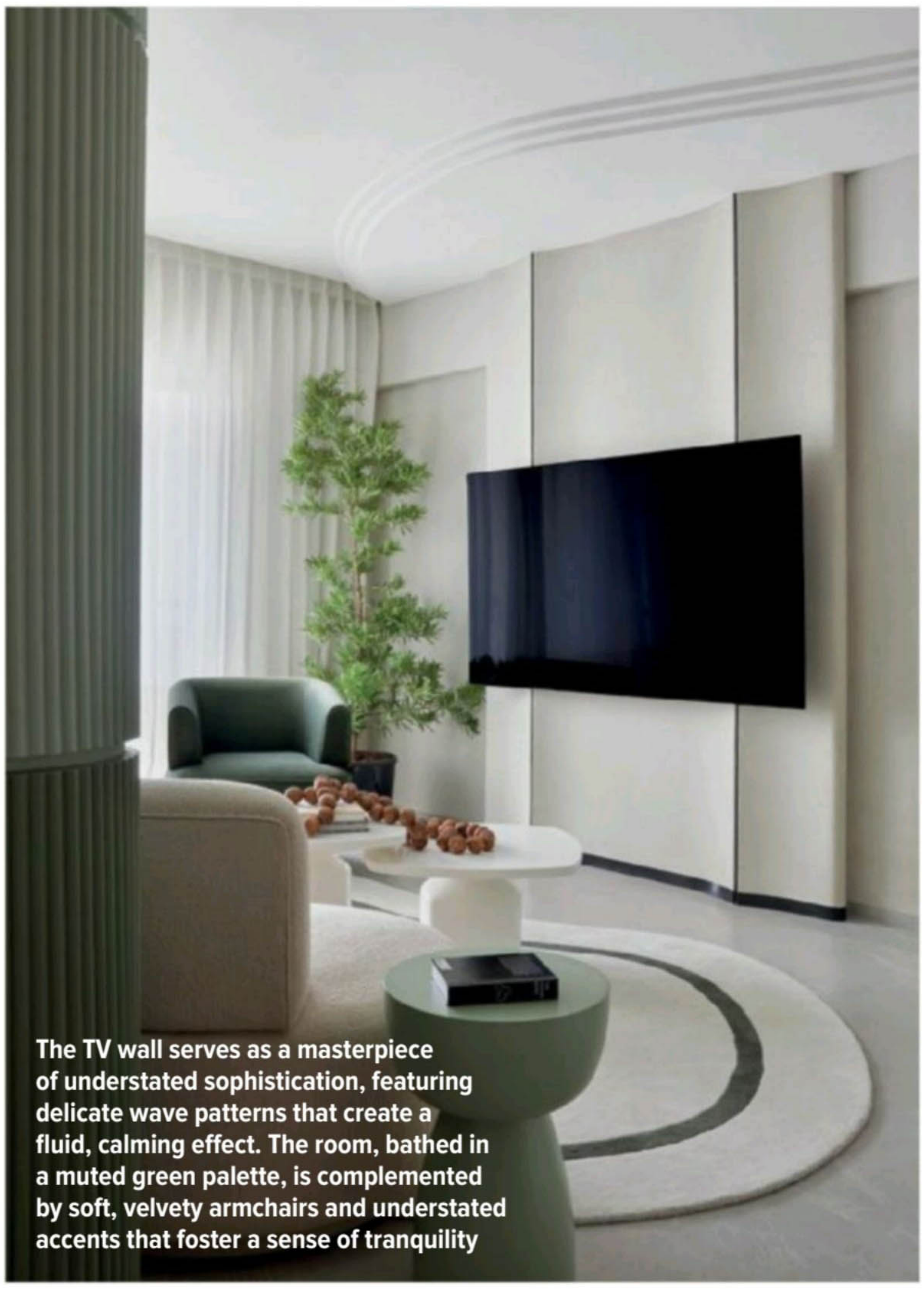
Imagine stepping into a home that breathes—where curved walls whisper movement, where light dances through strategically placed windows, and every corner tells a story of thoughtful curation. For a high-profile professional with a vibrant social life, this residence isn't merely a living space; it's a personal sanctuary that reflects her dynamic persona. "Central to our client's vision was the desire to maximize every inch of space while maintaining an airy and spacious feel throughout the house. This informed our approach to layout and design, inspiring us to craft an open floor plan that promotes fluid movement and encourages social interaction. By strategically integrating storage solutions and optimising multifunctional spaces, we were able to fulfill our client's wish for a home that is as practical as it is inviting," reveals Janak.

The design narrative unfolds like an intimate conversation, with an open kitchen serving as the first welcoming gesture. Here, a spacious island isn't just a countertop—it's an invitation to culinary adventures, a stage for both solitary morning coffees and animated dinner parties. The foyer, conceived as the home's central hub, sets the tone with its fluid architecture, seamlessly connecting living spaces in a choreographed dance of functionality. The dining nook emerges as a cocoon of soft curves, where a gracefully rounded sofa embraces a sleek dining table. This intimate space is designed for moments of quiet connection, with fluid lines and natural light enhancing the sense of tranquility. The living room, bathed in sunlight, exudes openness and calm.

The thoughtfully selected colour palette and diverse textures work in harmony, transforming the living area into a multifunctional space that elegantly balances both form and function



Designed for versatility, the media room can easily transition into a sleeping area with a sofa-cum-bed. A playful swing, requested by the homeowner, brings a fun and relaxing element to the room



The TV wall serves as a masterpiece of understated sophistication, featuring delicate wave patterns that create a fluid, calming effect. The room, bathed in a muted green palette, is complemented by soft, velvety armchairs and understated accents that foster a sense of tranquility

The colour palette speaks a language of understated luxury. Predominantly beige and grey, it's punctuated by delicate green hints and touches of red, creating a harmonious backdrop that feels both warm and refined.

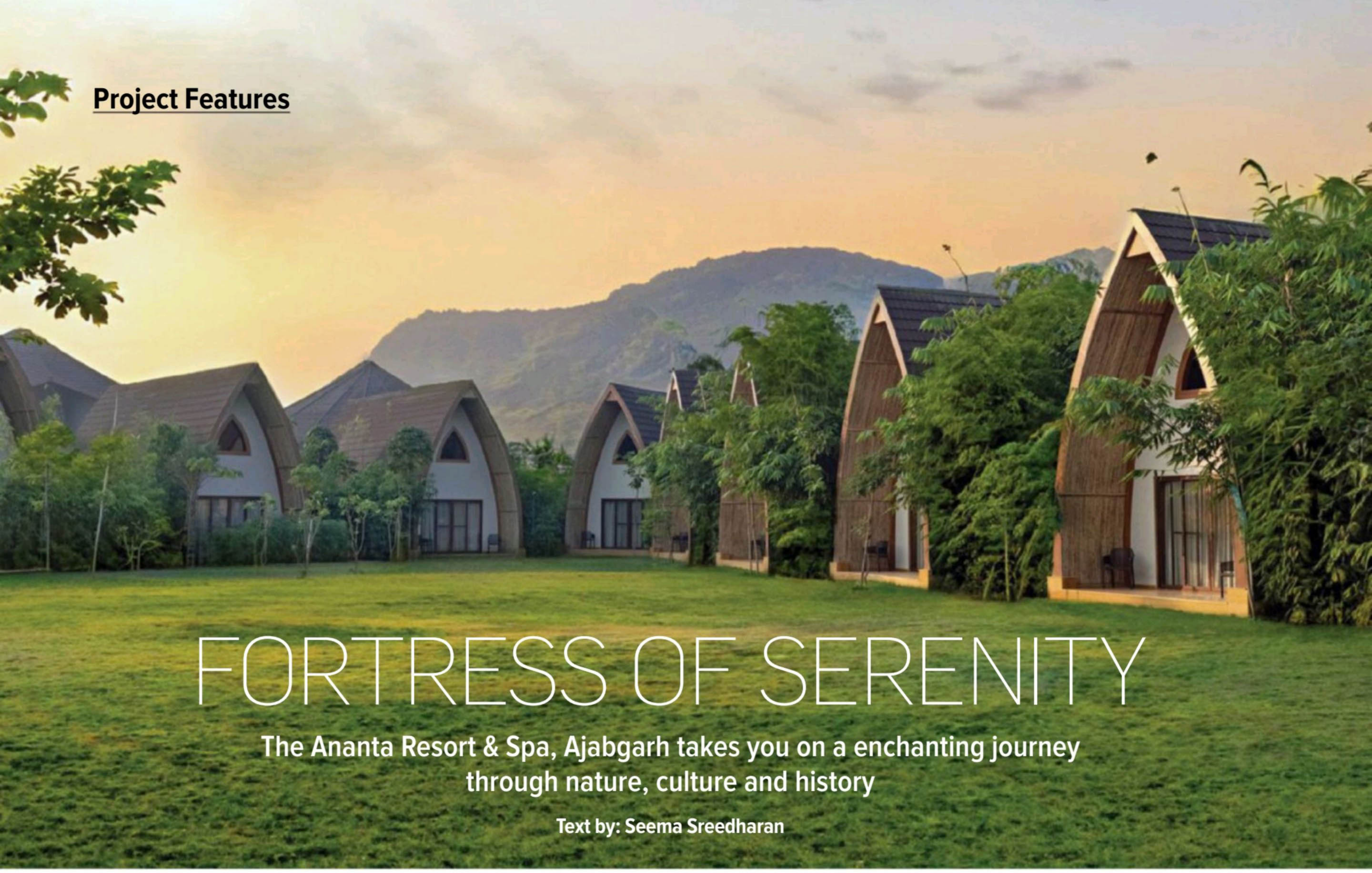
Clean lines and minimalist furnishings allow light to take center stage, while soft textures and neutral tones create an effortless harmony between sophistication and comfort.

What makes this home extraordinary is its ability to transform. A sliding door can transform the TV room from a communal space to a private retreat. An attached balcony offers a serene escape from the city's relentless energy, blurring the lines between indoors and nature. The design philosophy pivots on a subtle yet powerful theme: soft edges meeting modern metallic accents. Curved lines in furniture and architectural elements create a sense of tranquility, while strategic metal details inject a contemporary sophistication. A gradient fluted wall paneling becomes more than a design element—it's a narrative of texture and visual intrigue.

The colour palette speaks a language of understated luxury. Predominantly beige and grey, it's punctuated by delicate green hints and touches of red, creating a harmonious backdrop that feels both warm and refined. Black and gold metal details are sparingly used, like carefully chosen punctuation marks in a beautifully composed sentence. Every element is custom-crafted, a hallmark of Etica Design's commitment to personalization. From a quilted vanity in the bedroom to tailor-made mirrors with green tinting in the bathroom, no detail is overlooked. Even the CP (Chrome Plating) fittings and sanitary elements are selected with an eye for aesthetic cohesion.

When asked about his favorite part of the project, Janak shared, "In a bustling city like Mumbai, opportunities to create welcoming entryways are rare and precious. Designing the foyer was especially rewarding as it allowed me to set the tone for the entire home. I wanted it to exude warmth and sophistication from the moment you step through the door. It was immensely satisfying to craft a space that not only greets guests with style and elegance but also reflects the homeowner's personality and lifestyle."

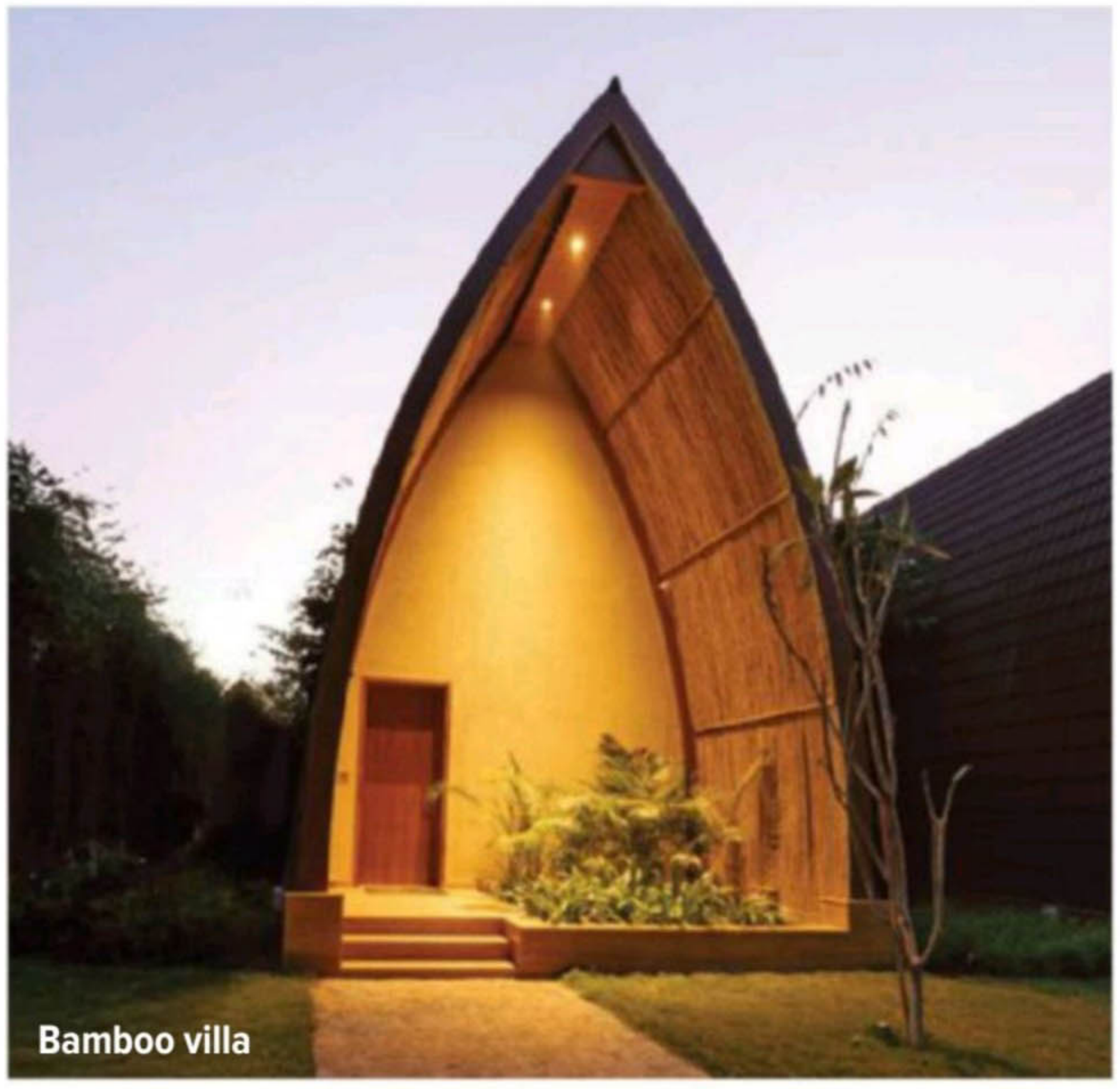
In a city where space is a luxury and personal expression is paramount; Sunlit Sanctuary stands as a blueprint for modern urban living. It proves that with intelligent design, 1000 square feet can feel expansive, that functionality can coexist with beauty, and that a home can be both a refuge and a reflection of its inhabitant's spirit. This isn't just interior design—it's life, choreographed. ✚



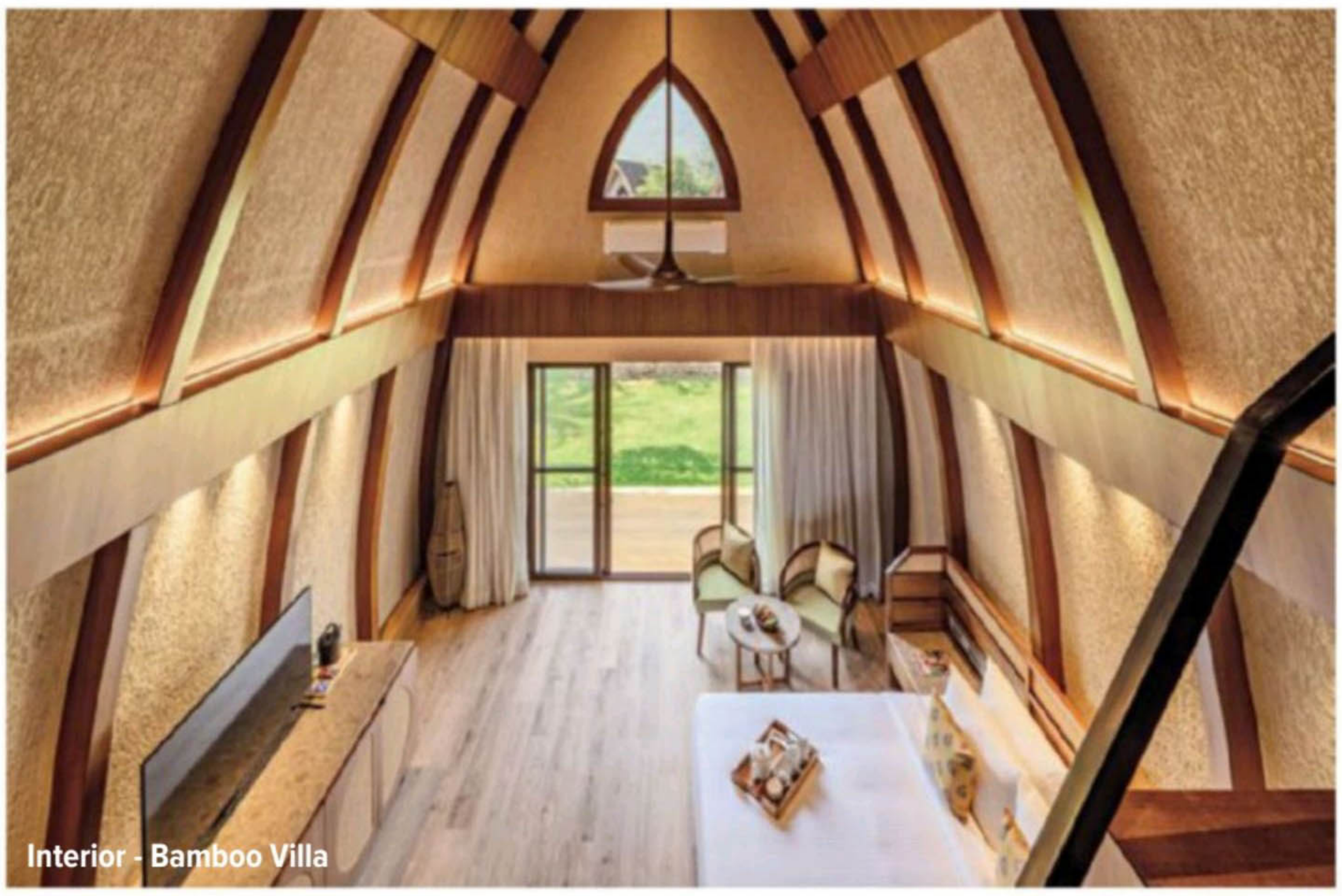
FORTRESS OF SERENITY

The Ananta Resort & Spa, Ajabgarh takes you on a enchanting journey through nature, culture and history

Text by: Seema Sreedharan



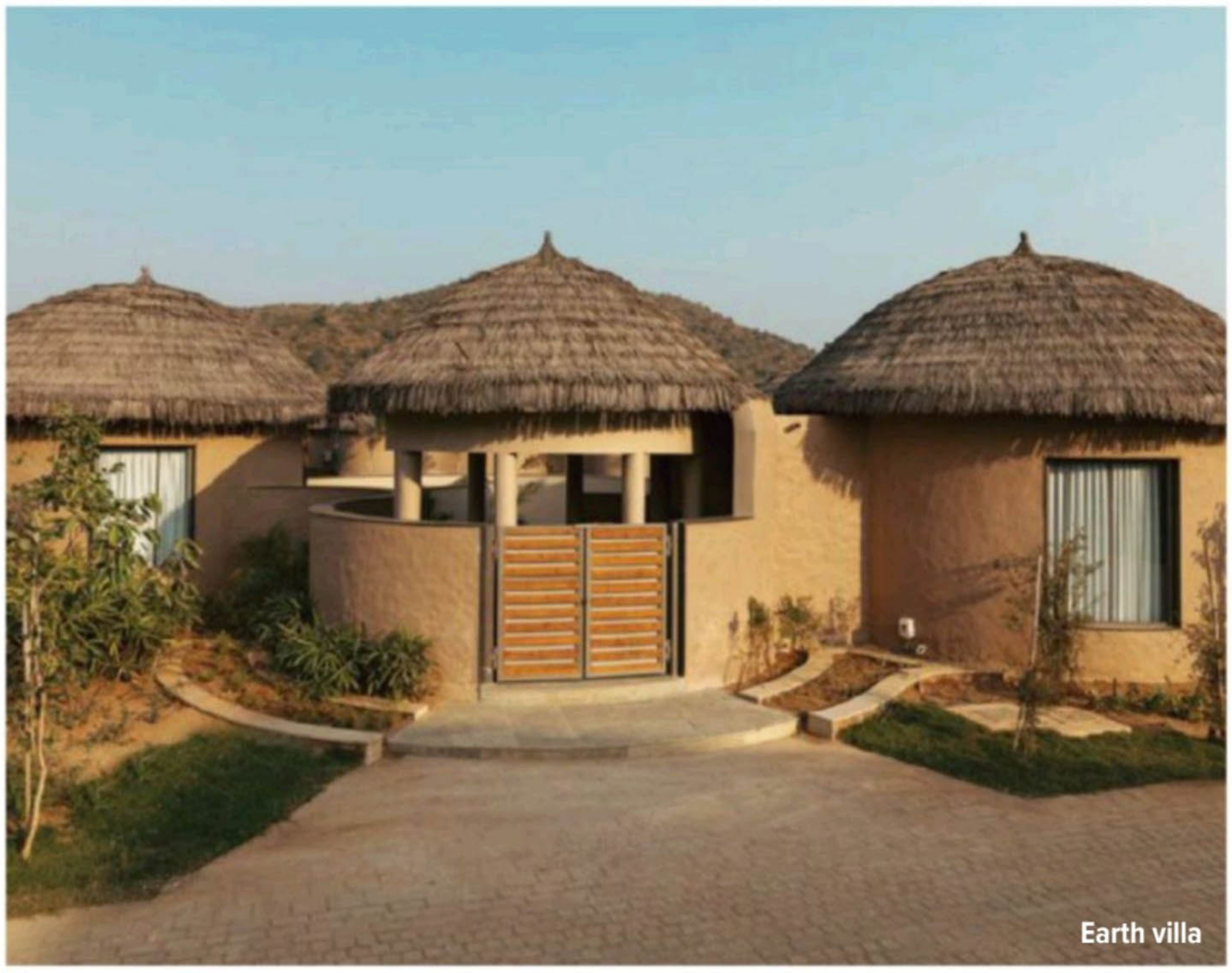
Bamboo villa

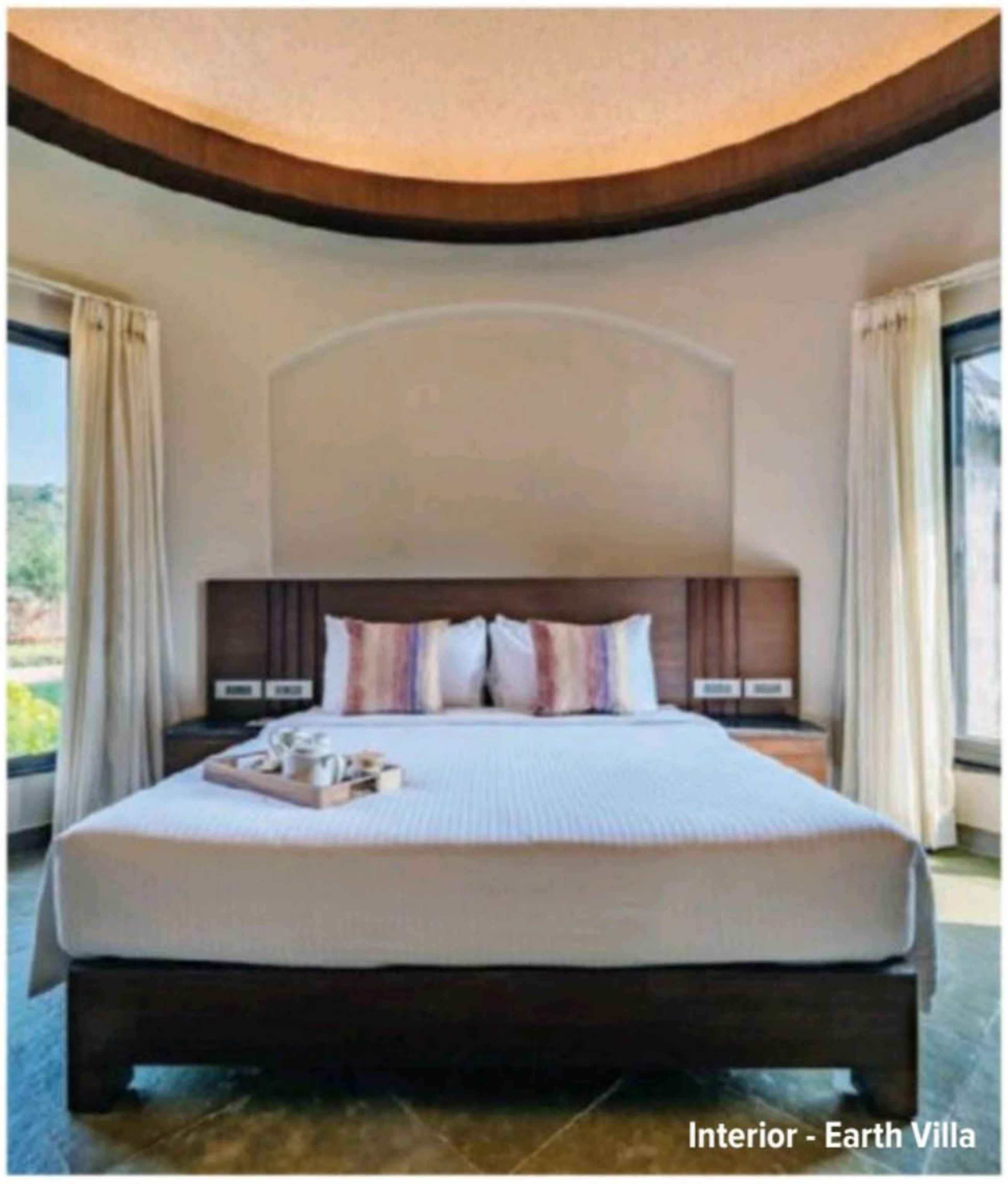


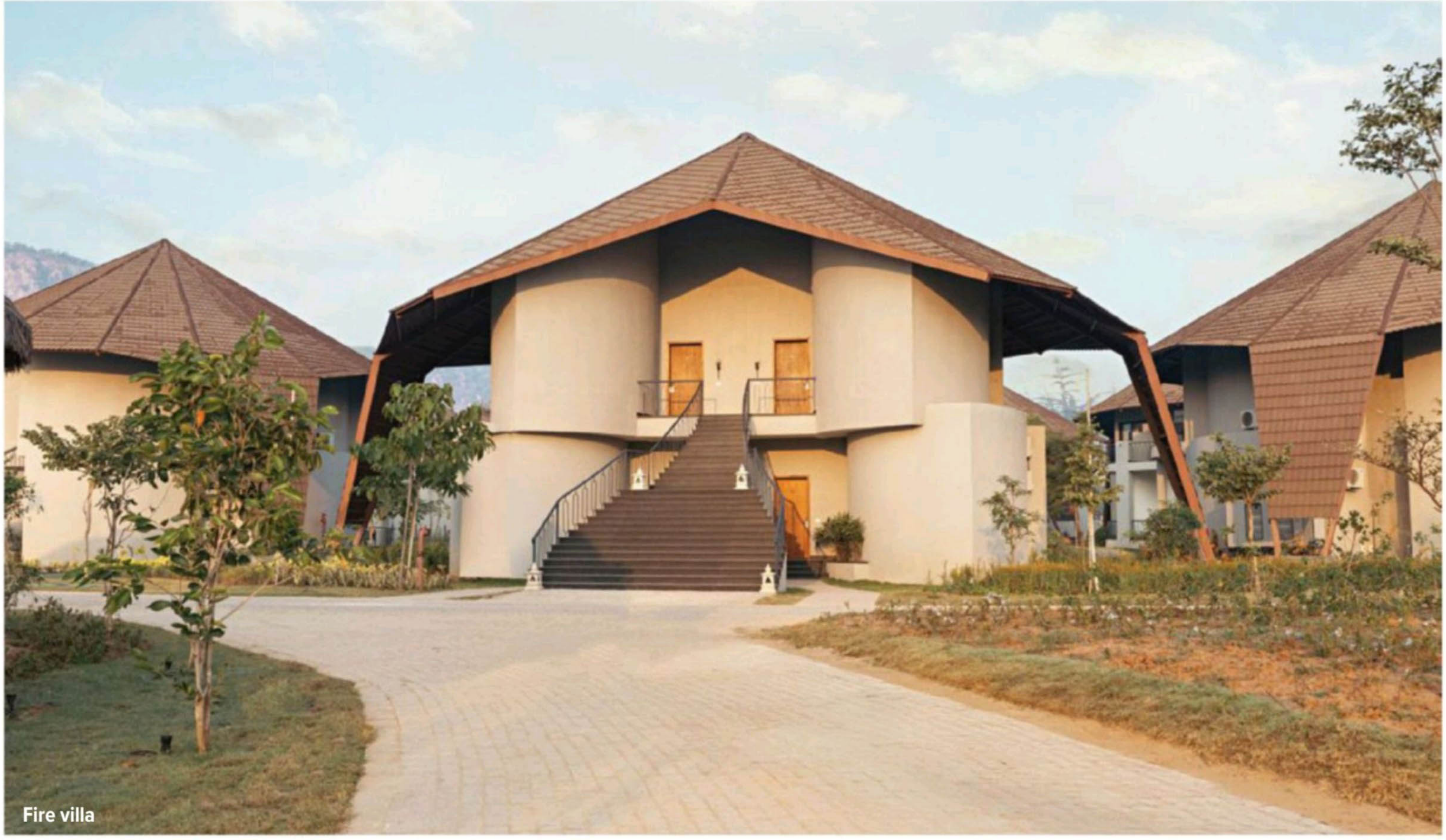
Interior - Bamboo Villa

No matter how familiar you are with Rajasthan, this state always has a surprise in store, waiting to be discovered. This trip to Ajabgarh, a town in Rajasthan that belies its unassuming facade, was no different. The rugged terrain of the Sariska Tiger Reserve provided a thrilling backdrop for safaris, while the labyrinthine alleys of Bhangarh Fort offered a fascinating glimpse into the region's complex history and folklore. Just a four-hour drive from Delhi, or a two-hour drive from Jaipur, lies a hidden gem waiting to be discovered – Ananta Resort & Spa, Ajabgarh, envisioned and led by third-generation visionaries Mukund Goyal, Sanjay Goyal, Mohit Goyal, and Ashutosh Goyal.

Spread across 30 acres of lush, untamed landscapes, this sanctuary is more than just a resort—it's a journey into the raw beauty of nature and experiences. Steeped in the storied legacy of Ajabgarh, a fortified town that has witnessed the rise and fall of empires, Ananta Ajabgarh weaves together the threads of history, culture, and nature to create a unique and unforgettable experience. As you step into this enchanting world, you'll discover a harmonious blend of traditional charm and modern luxury, carefully crafted to transport you to a bygone era of elegance and refinement.


Earth villa


Interior - Earth Villa


Fire villa

INSPIRED BY NATURE

Designed by Architect Khush Shah of Scarlett Design transports you to a world of luxury, even as it connects you with nature. Inspired by the elements of the nature, the 135 villas are segregated under four categories – Fire, Lagoon, Bamboo, and Earth. Each villa type offers a unique experience: the Earth Villas, with their mud walls and palm-thatched roofs, exude rustic charm; the conical Bamboo Cottages, featuring a cozy loft, are ideal for romantic getaways. The vibrant Fire Villas spark creativity and passion, while the show-stopping Lagoon Villas appear to float effortlessly on a serene man-made lake. The villas offer an interesting amalgamation of contemporary minimalism and organic charm.

CURATED EXPERIENCES

No memory of Rajasthan is complete without a culinary experience. Ananta Ajabgarh ensures that you go back with memories of a delectable Rajasthani Thali, complete with the dal bhati churma and the guilt-evoking ghevar! The resort also offers some excellent curated experiences including the Chatri Breakfast by the serene lakeside, a bespoke village tour that gives you an intimate glimpse into the vibrant local culture. You can also embark on an exhilarating adventure through the wild terrain of the Sariska Tiger Reserve.

At Ananta Ajabgarh, you transcend into a different world – a world surrounded by nature, history and culture.

100 YEARS OF FRENCH HERITAGE & ARISTOCRATIC DESIGN

From its iconic gilded cage elevator and government-protected artworks to a hidden chocolate and cheese-making atelier in the basement, Le Bristol Paris celebrates a century of hosting icons like the Chaplins and Rothschilds. Blending classic Rococo with contemporary elegance, the hotel continues to embody the timeless French art de vivre

By Ankita Rathod

Le Bristol
LE BRISTOL

Located near the Élysée Palace, this 18th-century mansion boasts an aristocratic façade, transformed into a luxury icon in 1925
Image Courtesy: Vincent Leroux

Located just a stone's throw from the Élysée Palace, on the prestigious Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Le Bristol Paris serves as a living gallery of French culture. Since its transformation in 1925 by visionary hotelier Hippolyte Jammet, this 18th-century private mansion has evolved into one of the world's most celebrated luxury landmarks. With 190 accommodations (including 72 suites spanning up to 2,155 square feet), the hotel boasts two Michelin-starred restaurants—Epicure (three stars) and 114 Faubourg (one star)—alongside a 5,629-square-foot event space and the Spa Le Bristol by La Prairie, complete with eight treatment rooms.

The hotel's high ceilings, ornate mouldings, and symmetrical façades retain its aristocratic roots, creating an ambience of refined elegance. Under Jammet's leadership, Le Bristol became a hub for high society, attracting luminaries like the Rothschilds, Charlie Chaplin, and Grace Kelly. Today, it harmonises its Rococo charm with modern design, offering a seamless blend of historic beauty and contemporary sophistication that exemplifies the French art de vivre.

THE GILDED CAGE

More than a means of transportation, Le Bristol's gilded cage elevator is a centrepiece of architectural artistry. With ornate wrought ironwork and gold leaf detailing, it reflects the glamour of Paris's Art Deco era. Its intricate floral-inspired designs balance curvilinear elegance with geometric symmetry, capturing both functional and aesthetic innovation.

A private terrace with sweeping views of Paris elevates the Suite Terrasse Azur into a serene oasis of elegance

Image Courtesy: Vincent Leroux

Intricate wrought ironwork and gold leaf details make the hotel's iconic gilded cage elevator a showcase of Art Deco artistry

Image Courtesy: Julia Krikoria

Romantic charm and refined luxury define the Honeymoon Suite, with high ceilings, ornate mouldings, and bespoke furnishings

Image Courtesy: Claire Cocano

Rococo-inspired flourishes meet modern sophistication in Le Bristol Paris's grand colonnade
Image Courtesy: Claire Cocano

The glass-panelled cabin enhances this experience, offering panoramic glimpses of the hotel's interiors as guests ascend or descend. This interplay of natural light, gold reflections, and shadow creates a dynamic visual experience. The surrounding marble staircase and wrought iron balustrades elevate the sense of grandeur, making each journey an immersion in the hotel's architectural legacy.

ART AS THE HEART

Le Bristol Paris stands as a custodian of French culture, in partnership with France's Monuments Historiques to preserve its architectural and artistic treasures. The hotel's historic collection is more than decorative—it narrates the evolution of Parisian craftsmanship and culture.

The Salon Versailles features 18th-century frescoes, meticulously restored in collaboration with heritage experts. These mythological scenes, painted in soft pastels, epitomise the Rococo movement, blending whimsy with sophistication. The interiors are further adorned with gilded floral mouldings, Gobelin tapestries, and Louis XV and Louis XVI furnishings, each piece a window into 18th-century French design. Marble fireplaces and boiseries (wood panelling) complete the rooms, creating an intimate link to the mansion's noble origins.

HIDDEN CRAFTSMANSHIP BELOW

Beneath Le Bristol's opulent interiors lies a hidden world of artisanal craftsmanship—Les Ateliers du Bristol. Designed with precision and respect for tradition, these workshops include a flour mill, chocolate factory, cheese-aging cellar, and a pasta laboratory. The architecture balances innovation with historical continuity, offering environments where time-honoured techniques are preserved.

Whether it's the precise engineering of the millstones or the climate-controlled cheese cellar, each atelier exemplifies how thoughtful design can elevate craft. Far beyond culinary function, these hidden spaces serve as architectural showcases, reinforcing the hotel's commitment to preserving French artistry through both tradition and modern utility.

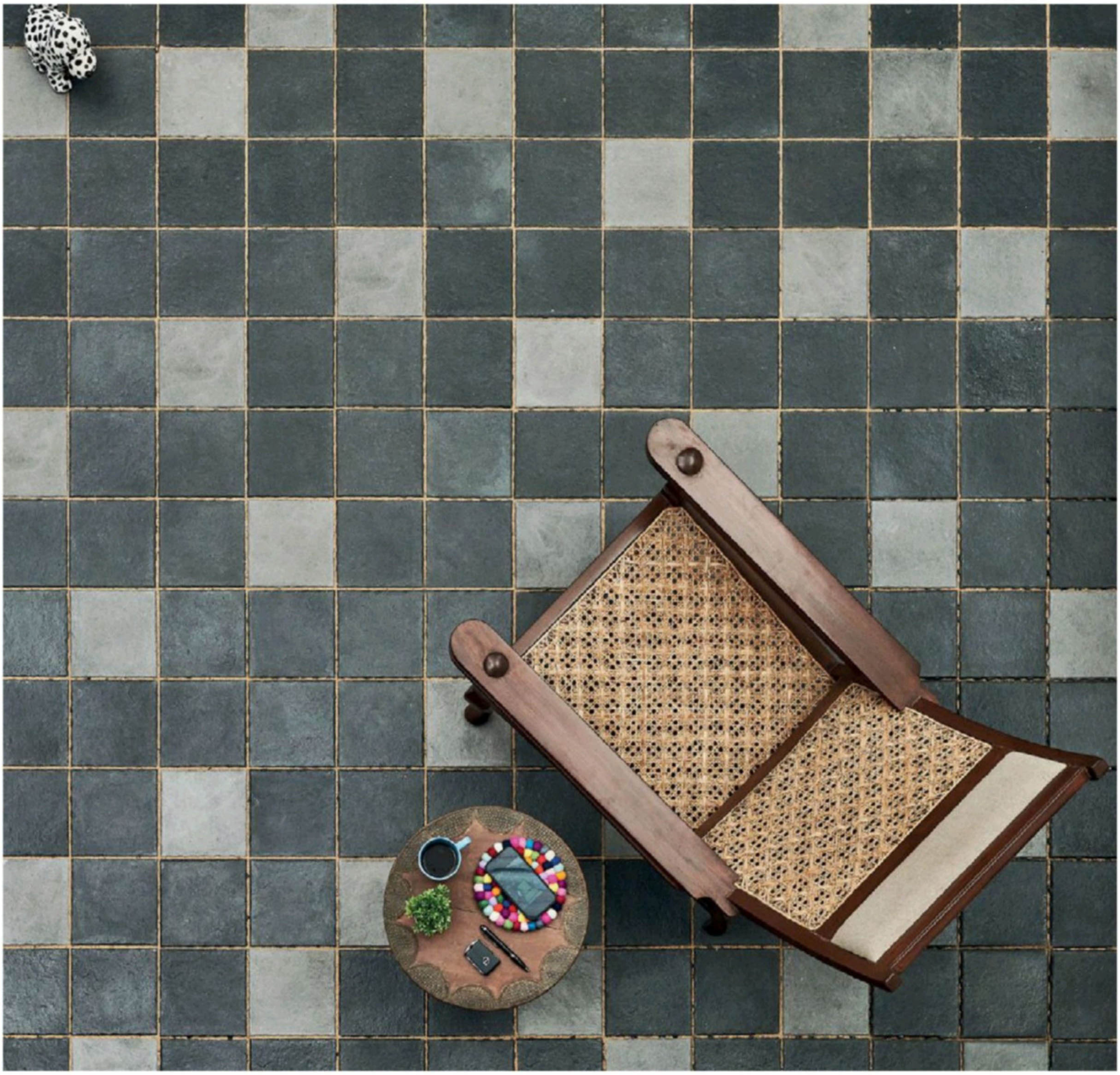
BALANCING HISTORY AND MODERNITY

The interiors of Le Bristol Paris strike a perfect balance between historical reverence and contemporary luxury. Epicure's three Michelin stars, set against a backdrop of restored architectural splendour, exemplifies how past and present coexist. Meanwhile, the La Prairie Spa offers minimalist modern design within the framework of the hotel's historic grandeur.

Throughout the hotel, bespoke furnishings and textiles complement preserved features, ensuring that comfort and beauty align. This careful curation speaks to the hotel's unwavering commitment to design excellence.

A PARISIAN EXPERIENCE

Every detail at Le Bristol Paris—from the iconic gilded elevator to the frescoed ceilings—tells a story of craftsmanship, heritage, and beauty. It's a place where art and architecture converge, offering guests an experience that is uniquely Parisian. Whether dining beneath Rococo-inspired motifs or exploring hidden ateliers, visitors are immersed in a legacy of history lovingly preserved and luxuriously presented.



PATHWAYS TO PERFECTION

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There are few things in the world that can determine your outlook towards a space. People top that list, because no matter what, beautiful people make beautiful places. But some elements speak luxury and elegance, and create the perfect setting - for family time, for outings, for special moments, for high-impact business, and of course, for you. Disha Ecoloc Pavers are one of those stunning things that make the outdoors better.

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